

# **Groundwater Management Plan**

## **Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, East Subbasin**

**Los Angeles County, California**



December, 2003



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## ***I. Introduction***

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### **Castaic Lake Water Agency**

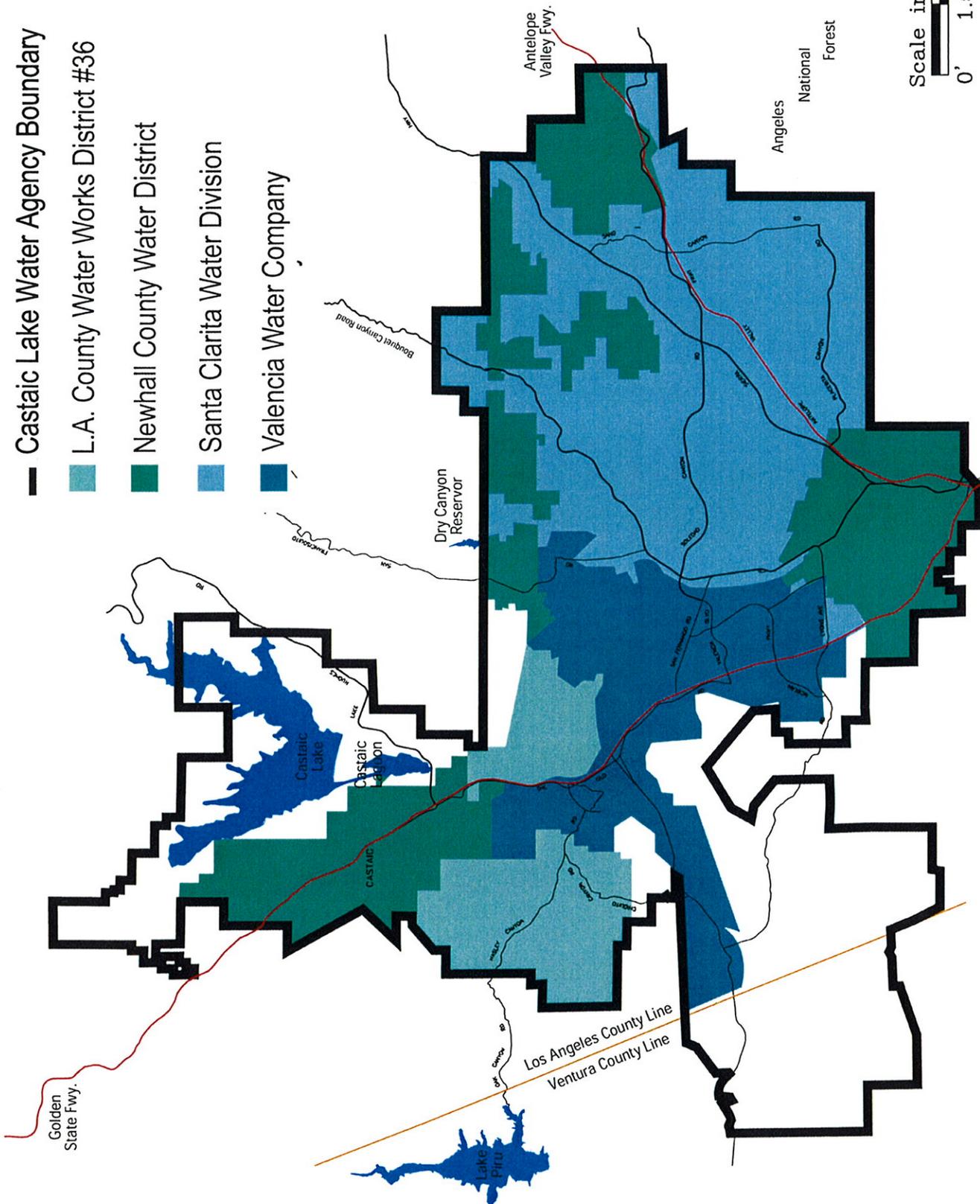
Castaic Lake Water Agency (CLWA) was formed in 1962 as a State Water Project Contractor to provide wholesale water supply from the State Water Project (SWP) to retail water purveyors in the Upper Santa Clara River area, most notably to Newhall County Water District, Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 36, Santa Clarita Water Company and Valencia Water Company. In 2001, as part of legislation authorizing CLWA to provide retail water service to individual municipal customers in addition to its ongoing wholesale water supply, Assembly Bill 134 included a requirement that CLWA prepare a groundwater management plan in accordance with the provisions of Water Code Section 10750 et seq., which was originally enacted by, and is commonly known as, Assembly Bill 3030. This groundwater management plan has been prepared to satisfy the requirements of AB 134 and to both complement and formalize a number of existing water supply and water resource planning and management activities in the CLWA service area.

The CLWA service area encompasses all of the existing and currently planned municipal water service areas of the Upper Santa Clara River area, i.e. the suburban areas generally proximate to the Santa Clara River in Los Angeles County, generally between hills of the San Gabriel Mountains and the Santa Susana Mountains on the north and south, and between the Los Angeles/Ventura County line and Lang Station on the west and east, respectively. The extent of the CLWA service area and the geographical locations of the individual water purveyors within the CLWA service area are illustrated in Figure 1-1.

### **Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, East Subbasin**

The groundwater basin generally beneath the CLWA service area, identified in DWR Bulletin 118 as the Santa Clara River Valley Groundwater Basin, East Subbasin (Basin No. 4-4.07), is comprised of two aquifer systems, the Alluvium generally underlying the Santa Clara River and its several tributaries, and the Saugus Formation which underlies much of the entire Upper Santa Clara River area. The mapped extent of the Santa Clara River Valley East Subbasin in Bulletin 118, which is approximately the outer extent of the Alluvium and the Saugus Formation, and its

- Castaic Lake Water Agency Boundary
- L.A. County Water Works District #36
- Newhall County Water District
- Santa Clarita Water Division
- Valencia Water Company



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**Figure 1-1**  
**CLWA and Purveyors' Service Areas**

relationship to the extent of the CLWA service area are illustrated in Figure 1-2.

The two aquifer systems that comprise the groundwater basin are described in detail in this plan. For purposes of this plan, the groundwater basin is encompassed by the CLWA service area, and CLWA is the logical public water supply agency to prepare and implement a groundwater management plan for the Santa Clara River Valley East groundwater subbasin.

### **Overview of Water Requirements and Supplies**

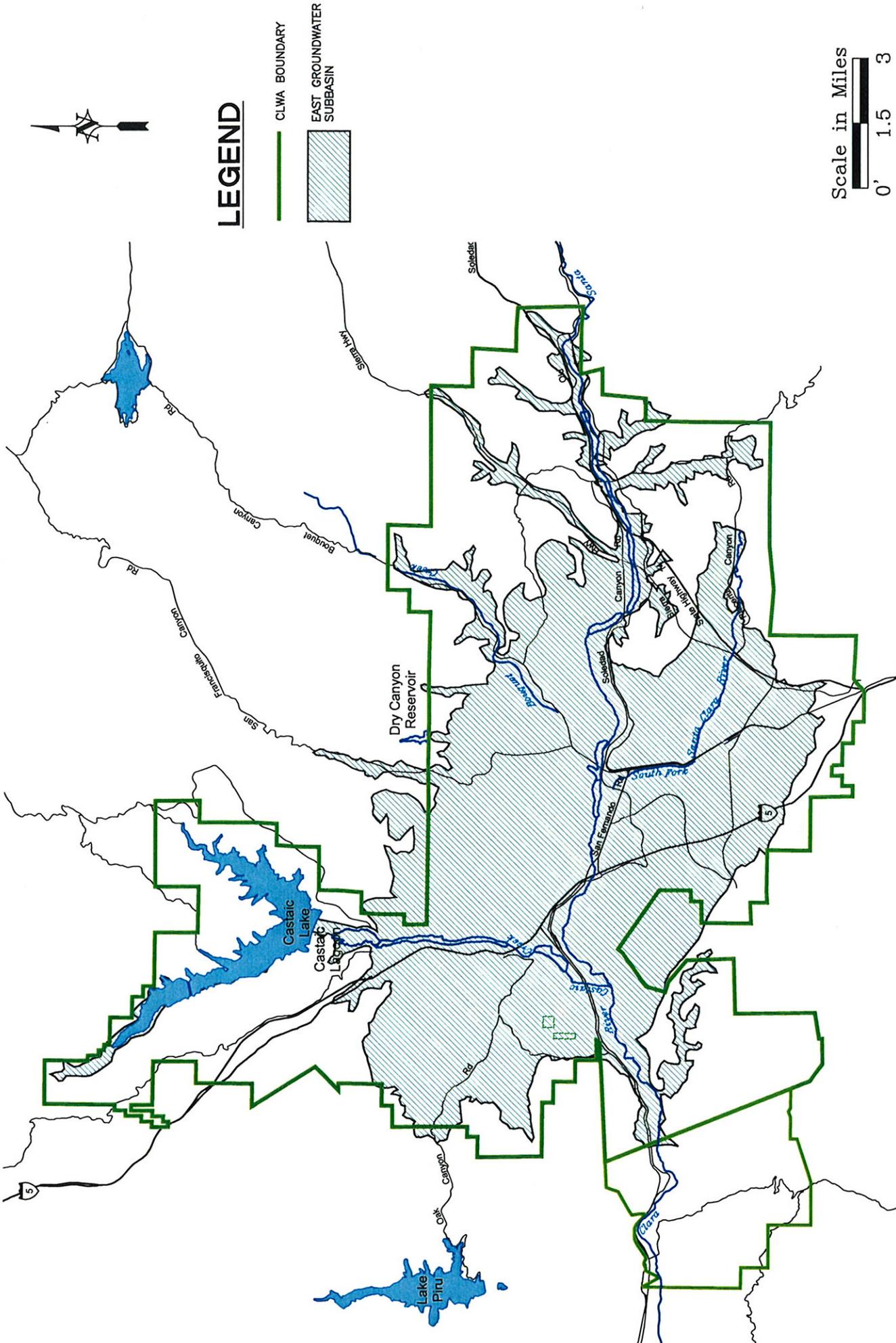
Historically, while development of local water supplies dates back at least 100 years, the earliest complete records of water use in the basin date from the late 1940's, when practically all water demand was for agricultural use. From that time through the early 1960's, agricultural water use, which was solely supplied by local groundwater, ranged from about 27,000 to about 42,000 acre-feet per year (afy). Over the succeeding three decades, agricultural water use progressively declined, into the range of about 8,000 to 10,000 afy, followed by a slight increase into the range of about 12,000 to 15,000 afy over the last ten years. Current projections are for agricultural water use to substantially decline, to about 7,000 afy, over the next 20 years.

Significant municipal water use in the basin did not begin until the early 1960's, when municipal uses, which were met exclusively at that time by local groundwater, were in the range of about 5,000 to 10,000 afy. By 1980, when supplemental surface water from the State Water Project (SWP) began to be imported to the basin, municipal water demands had increased to about 22,000 afy. Since then, municipal water demands have further increased, to their current level of about 61,000 afy, about 60 percent of which is supplied by SWP water, with the balance supplied by local groundwater. Current projections are for municipal water requirements to increase to about 106,000 afy over the next 20 years.

Historical and projected water requirements and supplies in the basin are discussed in more detail in Section IV of this Plan.

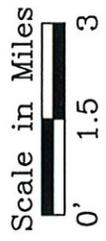
### **Water Code Section 10750 et. seq.**

In 1992, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill 3030 (AB 3030); that legislation was subsequently incorporated into the Water Code, Section 10750 et seq., to encourage local public agencies/water purveyors to adopt a formal plan to manage groundwater resources within



**LEGEND**

- CLWA BOUNDARY
- ▨ EAST GROUNDWATER SUBBASIN



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**Figure 1-2**  
**Santa Clara River Valley**  
**East Groundwater Subbasin**

their jurisdictions. Within the scope of Water Code Section 10753.8, a local groundwater management plan can potentially include up to twelve specific components. Although the plan need not be restricted to those specific components, the listed components are quite broad and cover essentially all of the groundwater management elements which are part of this plan or are likely to be considered for implementation into this plan in the foreseeable future. To a considerable extent, a number of the groundwater management activities listed in Water Code Section 10753.8 have been implemented in the Santa Clara River Valley East groundwater subbasin as part of an organized effort by the local municipal water purveyors, including CLWA, to manage the groundwater basin within its sustainable yield for the benefit of local water supply, and also to integrate management of the basin with the management of surface and groundwater immediately downstream on the Santa Clara River, in this case specifically with United Water Conservation District in Ventura County, as discussed in more detail herein.

The potential components of a groundwater management plan listed in Water Code Section 10753.8 include:

- the control of saline water intrusion.
- identification and management of wellhead protection areas and recharge areas.
- regulation of the migration of contaminated groundwater.
- the administration of a well abandonment and well destruction program.
- mitigation of conditions of overdraft.
- replacement of groundwater extracted by water producers.
- monitoring of groundwater levels and storage.
- facilitating conjunctive use operations.
- identification of well construction policies.
- the construction and operation by the local agency of groundwater contamination cleanup, recharge, storage, conservation, water recycling, and extraction projects.
- the development of relationships with state and federal regulatory agencies.
- the review of land use plans and coordination with land use planning agencies to assess activities which create a reasonable risk of groundwater contamination.

In 2002, the Legislature adopted Senate Bill 1938 (SB 1938) to amend and add to Water Code Section 10750 et seq. regarding the implementation of local groundwater management plans. While the provisions of SB 1938 did not alter the potential components of a local groundwater management plan, as listed above, it did add the following notable provisions:

- The local agency, in preparing a groundwater management plan, shall make available to the public a written statement describing how interested parties may participate in developing the plan; for purposes of carrying out the preceding requirement, the local agency may appoint, and consult with, a technical advisory committee consisting of interested parties. AB 134 actually anticipated this last item by requiring CLWA to form an Advisory Committee to review its Plan. The membership of the Advisory Committee was specified to consist of one representative from each retail water purveyor within CLWA and one representative from each groundwater producer within CLWA who pumped more than 100 acre-feet in the preceding water year (2000). In conformance with that requirement, CLWA formed an Advisory Committee consisting of representatives from the following organizations, who collectively fulfill the description of the membership specified in AB134:

- CLWA Santa Clarita Water Division
- Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
- Los Angeles County Waterworks District No. 36
- Newhall County Water District
- Newhall Land and Farming Company
- Robinson Ranch
- Valencia Water Company

- In order to qualify for funding assistance for groundwater projects or groundwater quality projects, for funds administered by DWR, a local agency must accomplish all the following relative to groundwater management:
  - prepare and implement, or participate in, or consent to be subject to, a groundwater management plan, a basin-wide management plan, or other integrated regional water management program or plan that meets the provisions listed below.
  - include groundwater management components that address monitoring and management of water levels, groundwater quality degradation, inelastic land subsidence, and changes in surface flows and quality that either affect groundwater or are affected by groundwater pumping.

- include provisions to cooperatively work with other public (and presumably private) entities whose service area or boundary overlies the groundwater basin.
- include mapping of the groundwater basin, as defined in DWR's Bulletin 118, and the boundaries of the local agency subject to the plan, plus the boundaries of other local agencies that overlie the basin.
- adopt monitoring protocols designed to detect changes in groundwater levels, groundwater quality, inelastic land subsidence (for basins where subsidence has been identified as a potential problem), and flow and quality of surface water that either directly affect groundwater, or are directly affected by groundwater pumping.

Of the potential groundwater management activities listed in Water Code Section 10753.8, those already being investigated and actively implemented as part of less formal groundwater management by the purveyors include avoidance of overdraft, implementation of conjunctive use, monitoring of groundwater levels and quality, initiation of groundwater contamination control, analysis of basin yield for ongoing avoidance of overdraft, and annual analysis and reporting on basin conditions. The historic focus of informal groundwater management in the Santa Clara River Valley East groundwater subbasin has been on water supply, quantity and quality, to avoid conditions of overdraft, primarily by augmenting local groundwater supplies with a supplemental, imported surface water supply from the State Water Project. More recently, efforts have been added to include ongoing monitoring and the compilation of data into a data management system that is integrated with a comparable database system for the downstream surface water resources and groundwater basins on the Santa Clara River. Recent efforts have also included initiation of a process to develop a numerical groundwater flow model of the basin for analysis of basin response to various water supply, recharge, and conjunctive use management alternatives that might be applicable for the basin. The potential groundwater management provisions not historically implemented have been those more focused on groundwater contamination; however, very recent activities have added this component to local groundwater management as a result of impacts on several municipal water supply wells from a former munitions manufacturing site in the basin, as discussed in more detail herein.

In summary, in many respects, the local municipal water purveyors, including CLWA, have

already begun developing and implementing important parts of a formal local groundwater management program as part of developing reliable water supplies for in-basin needs. To ensure the reliability of the groundwater component of water supplies to meet existing and projected demands, those parts of local groundwater management planning already include monitoring, formulation of a data base, and integration with the database for adjoining downstream basins, analysis of groundwater conditions and annual reporting on water conditions in the basin, initiation of groundwater flow modeling, ongoing conjunctive use of local groundwater and imported SWP supplies, and initiation of investigation and control of localized groundwater contamination. The groundwater management plan described herein can be envisioned as a formalization, and some expansion, of those ongoing management efforts in the Santa Clara River Valley East groundwater subbasin.

The balance of this plan is organized to first establish a set of management objectives, or goals, for the basin; to then describe existing groundwater basin conditions, including areas of concern and identified problems; to present historical and projected water demands in the basin; and to finally present a set of groundwater management actions which, in aggregate, are the elements of this groundwater management plan.