



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact:

Lauren Hersh, Information Officer

(916) 653-2639 Lauren.Hersh@water.ca.gov

Lauren Bisnett, Information Officer

(916) 653-7564 Lauren.Bisnett@water.ca.gov

DWR Releases Draft Regulations for Managing Groundwater Basins Sustainably

Public Comment Period Begins

SACRAMENTO – The [Department of Water Resources](#) (DWR) today released [draft regulations](#) that will assist local public agencies and groundwater sustainability agencies to manage and regulate California’s groundwater basins as outlined in the landmark [Sustainable Groundwater Management Act](#), enacted by Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr. in September 2014. An overview of the draft regulations was presented to the California Water Commission at its meeting February 17, 2016.

From the outset, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act was intended to recognize that groundwater is best managed on the local level and that each groundwater basin has unique characteristics and challenges. An inherently technical and complex task, managing groundwater requires regulations that can address the goal of sustainability across such a geologically and hydrologically diverse state as California.

Groundwater supplies over a third of the water Californians use, and the Act requires local agencies to draft plans to bring groundwater aquifers into balanced levels of pumping and recharge (Water Code §10733.2). The historic law requires DWR to adopt regulations which outline a process for evaluating and implementing Groundwater Sustainability Plans or alternatives to such plans, as well as coordination agreements between local agencies in high- and medium-priority groundwater basins by June 1, 2016. Technical and financial assistance will be available to help local agencies develop their plans.

According to Section 10727 (b) of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the three options for developing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan include the following:

- *A single plan covering the entire basin developed and implemented by one groundwater sustainability agency.*

- *A single plan covering the entire basin developed and implemented by multiple groundwater sustainability agencies.*
- *Multiple plans implemented by multiple groundwater sustainability agencies and coordinated with a single coordination agreement that covers the entire basin.*

DWR developed the draft Groundwater Sustainability Plan regulations after conducting listening sessions and extensive outreach around the state to gather perspectives from Advisory Groups, statewide stakeholders, partners, and local agencies. The initial draft of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan regulations is available for public review on DWR's [website](#), where the public also has the opportunity to submit written comments through March 25, 2016. DWR will host a statewide webinar and three public meetings in March to further solicit public input on the draft regulations. The final Groundwater Sustainability Plan regulations will also take public comment into consideration.

For more information regarding California's groundwater please visit:
<http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/index.cfm>

While the early winter rain and snowpack are promising, this may yet prove to be a fifth consecutive year of drought in California. To learn about all the actions the state has taken to manage our water system and cope with the impacts of the drought, visit [Drought.CA.gov](#). Every Californian should take steps to conserve water; find out how at [SaveOurWater.com](#).

