



CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES

## NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 23, 2016

Lauren Bisnett, Information Officer  
(916) 653-7564, [Lauren.Bisnett@water.ca.gov](mailto:Lauren.Bisnett@water.ca.gov)

Lauren Hersh, Information Officer  
(916) 653-2639 [Lauren.Hersh@water.ca.gov](mailto:Lauren.Hersh@water.ca.gov)

### **DWR Awards \$6.7 Million in Grants to Launch Sustainable Groundwater Management Planning Efforts**

**SACRAMENTO, CA** – The [Department of Water Resources \(DWR\)](#) today announced it is awarding [21 counties](#) a total of \$6.7 million in grants to help with sustainable groundwater planning. The Proposition 1 [Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program](#) provides funding for county projects that will develop groundwater plans consistent with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) enacted by Governor Edmund G. Brown, Jr. in 2014. The awards were made to counties with high and medium priority groundwater basins, some of which are in critical over-draft.

DWR received 23 grant applications requesting a total of approximately \$7 million. Adding the matching funds provided by the grant award recipients, approximately \$13 million will be dedicated to projects in counties that need to begin long-term planning for sustainable groundwater management. According to Laura McLean, Senior Engineering Geologist with the Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program, DWR gave priority to proposals that will benefit disadvantaged communities, address critically over-drafted basins, address basins exhibiting stressed conditions, and proposals to enact ordinances to address groundwater sustainability.

“This funding will help counties address long-term planning goals, better understand what’s coming in and going out of their aquifers, and get the much-needed jumpstart on addressing the new regulations,” says McLean. “More funding will certainly become available to help groundwater sustainability agencies moving forward. We aim to complement the timeline requirements of the law as we continue to streamline our grant processes to get the money out as quickly as possible.”

Colusa County is among the 21 counties across California receiving funding and plans to use the funding to advance groundwater sustainability through policy and technical refinement. Mendocino County plans to use the funds for the initial groundwater

sustainability plan development, and Kings County's proposal will include developing a groundwater model for its critically over-drafted groundwater basin.

The funding provides the means for local communities to create long-term sustainable groundwater management plans for California's groundwater basins. On average, groundwater makes up over one-third of California's water supply and over one-half of the supply during drought years. When groundwater basins are critically over-drafted, chronically lowered groundwater levels, seawater intrusion, and land subsidence can result. The SGMA requires basins in conditions of critical overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan two years prior to other high- and medium-priority basins, stressing the need for funding to implement sustainability plans and take steps to rehabilitate basins as soon as possible.

DWR announced draft funding recommendations in January and considered public comments on the proposals. DWR staff is working with grantees on detailed work plans for their respective projects including efforts to develop groundwater ordinances and develop plans that protect basins, their beneficial uses, and facilitate basin-wide sustainability. Over next several months DWR will continue to work with counties regarding budgets and schedules for the funds, which counties can expect to receive as soon as June 2016.

For more detailed information from the Sustainable Groundwater Planning Grant Program and a map identifying the allocated awards please visit [www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/sgwp/solicitation.cfm](http://www.water.ca.gov/irwm/grants/sgwp/solicitation.cfm).

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

Discover more about the DWR Sustainable Groundwater Management Program at <http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/index.cfm>.

To be added to the SGW Program contact list, please email your contact information to [SGWP@water.ca.gov](mailto:SGWP@water.ca.gov).



While 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](http://Drought.CA.gov). Every Californian should take steps to conserve water; find out how at [SaveOurWater.com](http://SaveOurWater.com).