



Date: February 23, 2016

To: Main San Gabriel Basin Parties to the Judgment

From: Anthony C. Zampello, Executive Officer

Subject: 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster staff have received some questions about the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) and if or how it affects the Main San Gabriel Basin. In terms of groundwater as a resource in the State of California, geology and conditions can vary widely based on region. Groundwater management varies widely as well. At its most basic level groundwater management follows the same principle as successful financial management; deposits must meet or exceed withdrawals to avoid running a deficit. In very general terms, the purpose of SGMA was to develop plans within the State of California for groundwater basins that lacked any sort of sustainability management program.

Groundwater management agencies such as the Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster (Watermaster), working within adjudicated basins (such as the Main San Gabriel basin), have cooperated with the Legislature and other interested parties to ensure that SGMA recognized the sustainability afforded by existing adjudications and the replenishment and monitoring programs within those basins. In the final legislation, adjudicated basins, such as the Main San Gabriel groundwater basin, were exempted from SGMA. In fact, we were exempted specifically by name, leaving no doubt as to our status regarding the Act.

Because we have been effectively managed for decades, no additional SGMA management plan is required beyond the reports and plans we currently prepare. This distinction in the Act allows the Department of Water Resources (DWR), the state agency tasked with implementing SGMA, to concentrate its efforts in areas of most critical need and at the same time allows us to continue to

concentrate our efforts on management programs already underway in our basin. The only actions required under SGMA are for Watermaster to submit evidence of adjudication, and then to submit our annual reports each year, which we already prepare.

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Quick Facts

The SGMA was signed into law on September 16, 2014. It recognizes groundwater as an integral part of the state's water supply and provides a framework for managing groundwater in a sustainable way throughout the State of California. The SGMA specifically:

- Establishes a definition of sustainable groundwater management.
- Establishes a framework for local agencies in which to develop plans and implement strategies to sustainably manage groundwater resources.
- Sets a 20-year timeline for implementation.
- Exempts adjudicated basins (including the Main San Gabriel Basin) from most of the requirements defined in the SGMA.

Key Definitions Described in the SGMA

1. "Sustainable Yield" is the maximum quantity of water that can be withdrawn annually from a groundwater supply without causing an undesirable result
2. "Sustainable Groundwater Management" is the management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results.
3. "Undesirable Result" means any of the following:
 - a. Regular lowering of groundwater levels, but excluding reductions in groundwater levels during a drought if they are offset by increases in groundwater levels during other periods;
 - b. Significant and unreasonable reductions in groundwater storage;
 - c. Significant and unreasonable seawater intrusion;

- d. Significant and unreasonable degradation of water quality;
- e. Significant and unreasonable land subsidence; and
- f. Surface water depletions that have significant and unreasonable adverse impacts on beneficial uses.

Who Will Be Responsible For Implementing the SGMA at the Local Level in Non-Adjudicated Areas?

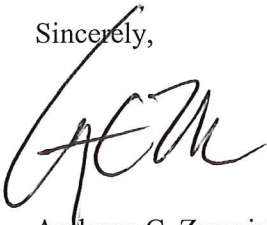
The Act requires the formation of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) in all non-adjudicated basins. Any local agency or combination of local agencies overlying a groundwater basin may form a GSA. Any areas not covered by a local agency will automatically default to the local county, unless they opt out.

Due to the urgency with which this legislation was introduced and made into law, DWR did not have sufficient time to have all of the administration and reporting mechanisms in place. In fact, Basin Boundary Reviews are still underway and Standard Reporting forms for adjudicated basins are still being finalized. Watermaster staff has been actively engaged with DWR as implementation moves forward. There is no action required on your part related to SGMA for the Main San Gabriel Basin.

Where Can I Find More Information on the SGMA?

There are a number of resources available to the public, including the California Department of Water Resources website at <http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/sgm/> and <http://www.groundwater.ca.gov>. However, if you have additional questions please contact either Kelly Gardner, Assistant Executive Officer, or me at (626) 815-1300 for more information on SGMA.

Sincerely,



Anthony C. Zampielo, Executive Officer
Main San Gabriel Basin Watermaster