

# THE STATE WATER BOARD'S ROLE IN SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

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# Updates

- SGMA Overview
- SWRCB, DWR activities and coordination
- Other Program work

# SGMA

**Signed by Governor on September 16, 2014**

- AB 1739 (Dickinson)
- SB 1168 (Pavley)
- SB 1319 (Pavley)
- Effective January 1, 2015



*“A central feature of these bills is the recognition that groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally.”*

- Governor Edmund G. Brown Jr., in signing statement accompanying SGMA groundwater legislation.

# The Basics

- Requires formation of sustainability agencies and development of sustainability plans
  - 127 High and medium priority basins
- Authorizes management tools for local agencies
- Defines timeframe for accomplishing goals
- Provides alternative if users can show basin is sustainable
- Creates state “backstop”

# STATEWIDE CASGEM PRIORITIZATION

## Basins displayed by priority:

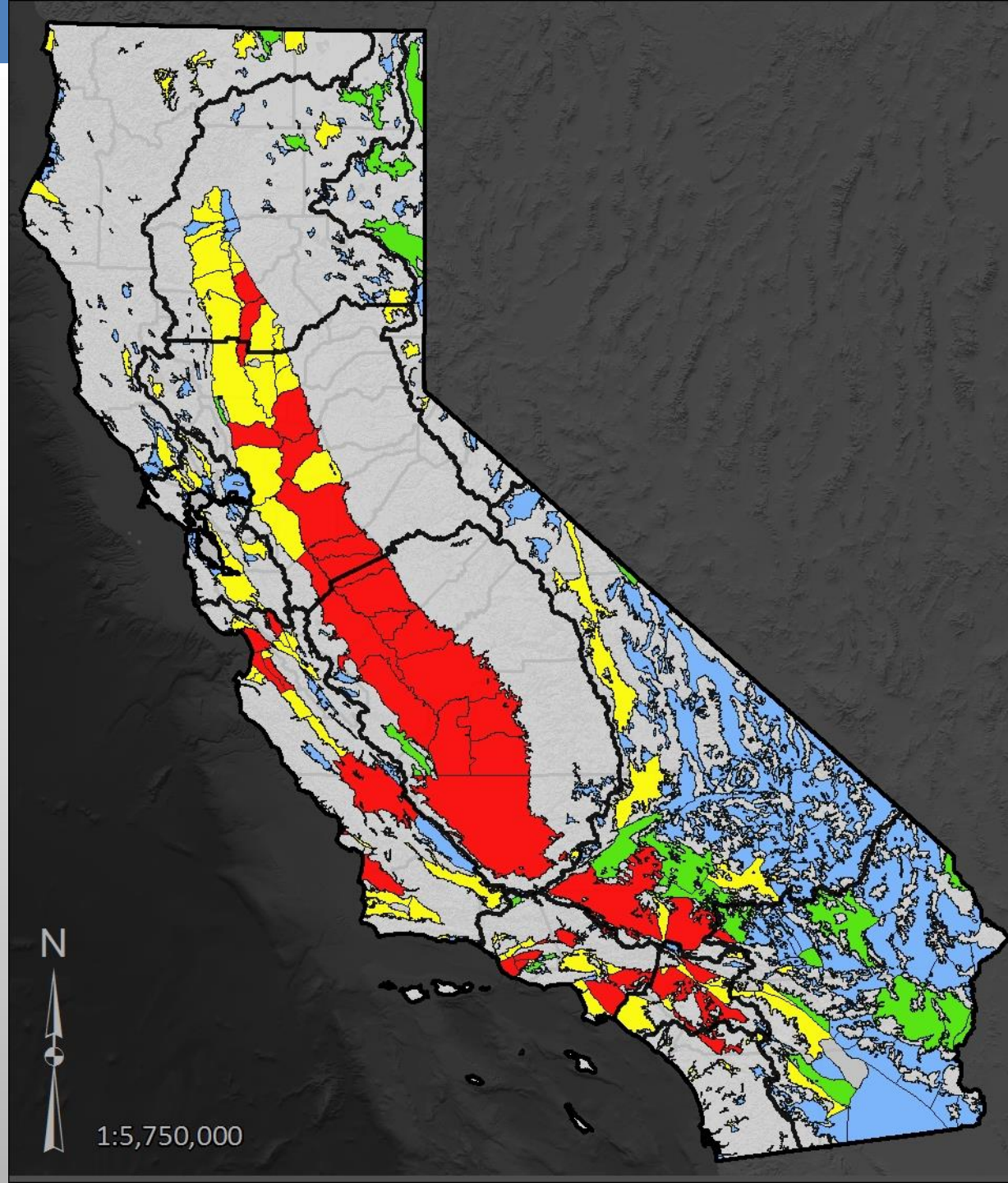
43 High Priority (R)

84 Medium Priority (Y)

27 Low Priority (G)

361 Very Low Priority (B)

Calculation involves:  
Population & Pop. Growth  
Irrigated acreage  
Public supply well distribution  
And other variables



# Key SGMA Requirements

- Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) (2017)
  - One or more agencies
  - If more than one agency per basin, GSAs must coordinate
- GSAs Prepare Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs) (2020/2022)
  - Measurable objectives
  - Implementation milestones
  - Annual reports (water use, extraction, change in storage)
- Achieve Sustainability 20 years after plan adoption, prevent “undesirable results”

# Sustainable groundwater management

Management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results.

## Undesirable results

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels (not including overdraft during a drought, if a basin is otherwise managed)
- Significant and unreasonable:
  - reductions in groundwater storage
  - seawater intrusion
  - degradation of water quality
  - Significant and unreasonable land subsidence
  - Surface water depletions adversely impacting on beneficial uses

# The “Backstop” State Board Intervention

After	Intervention Trigger
June 30, 2017	Areas without a GSA begin reporting well locations and extraction data to SWRCB; can begin probationary basin designation 180 days later.
Jan. 31, 2020	Can begin probationary basin designation in critically overdrafted basins with no GSP or where GSP is inadequate
Jan. 31, 2022	Can begin probationary basin designation in other high/medium priority basins without a GSP or inadequate GSP and basin is in long-term overdraft
Jan. 31, 2025	Probationary basin designations where GSP is inadequate and significant depletions of interconnected surface waters

**In all triggering events, intervention is the result of failure by locals to create a GSA or adopt and implement a GSP**



# State Water Board Roles

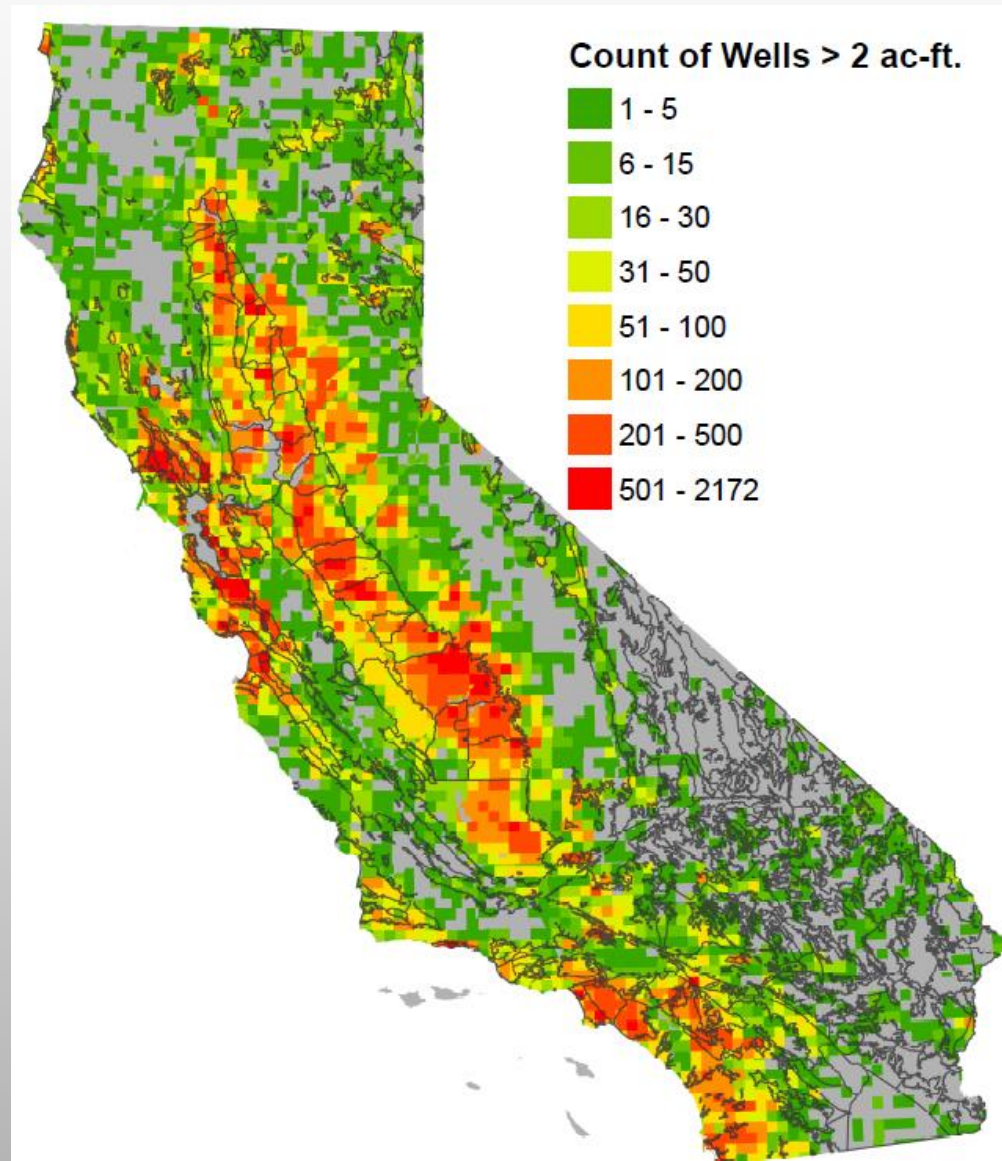
- The State Backstop
  - Data Manager
  - Basin Manager
- Coordination with DWR
  - Communication
  - Outreach
  - Regulation development
  - Implementation of the backstop

# Role as Data Manager: Potentially Un-Managed Areas (PUMAs)

- First backstop role for Board is data collection (July 1, 2017)
- Groundwater users in PUMAs report to State Board (Water Code §5203)
  - Place of extraction
  - Monthly records of volume of extractions
  - Purpose of use
  - Place of use
  - *Any other info required to designate a basin as probationary and write interim plans*

# Reporting System Needs

- Electronic reporting system to collect PUMA data
- Data need for interim plans
- Track fees
- Public interface



Scoping, IT  
business analysis  
process,  
coordination with  
DWR

2015

2016

Beta testing by  
January 1,  
2017 and  
revisions as  
necessary

2017

Functional  
by July 1,  
2017

Stakeholder outreach  
process by winter 2016.

Start bidding process, select  
vendor, system design by  
summer 2016

# Data System Development

# Role as Basin Manager

Develop fees to support basin management

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graph TD; A[Develop fees to support basin management] --> B[Designate probationary basins]; B --> C[Probationary basins lead to interim sustainability plans]; C --> D[Interim plans manage basins until local efforts come up to speed];
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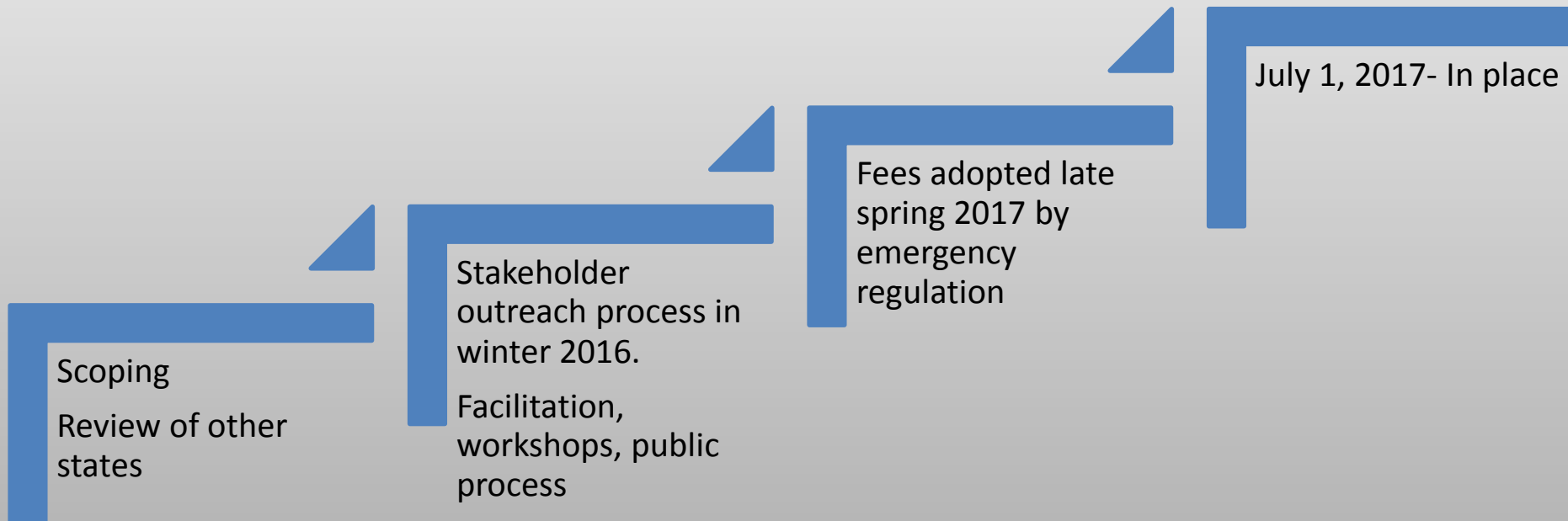
Designate probationary basins

Probationary basins lead to interim sustainability plans

Interim plans manage basins until local efforts come up to speed

# Fees

- Cover all costs related to backstop
  - Facilitation, investigation, monitoring, hearings, enforcement, administration
  - PUMA reporting and participation in Board hearings
- Fees need to be in place with data reporting system



# DWR Key Activities

- Basin Boundary Revision Regulations
- Identification of Basins in Critical Overdraft
- Update Basin Priorities
- **Regulations for Sustainability Plans and how those plans will be reviewed**
- Communication and Outreach
- Proposition 1 Grant Guidelines and Funding Criteria

# SWRCB & DWR Coordination

- Coordination Teams
- DWR responsible for evaluating GSPs; Board is responsible for implementing backstop, identifying probationary basins, writing interim basin management plans
- Board can request that DWR conduct investigations and provide technical assistance
- In some cases, the Board cannot designate probationary basins without first “consulting with DWR”



# Summary: State Board Approach

- Support DWR in early years
- Support areas that want the help in early years
- Know the field, be prepared to step in strategically
- Develop ability to use tools sparingly
- Be judicious, strategic, and effective when acting
- Lightest touch possible, with goal of local success
- Consider existing authorities when needed
  - Waste and Unreasonable Use
  - Public Trust Doctrine
  - Water Code Section 2100
  - Subterranean Streams

# Thank You!

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Additional Information:

[www.groundwater.ca.gov](http://www.groundwater.ca.gov)

DWR – [www.water.ca.gov/groundwater](http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater)

State Board –

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/gmp/index.shtml](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gmp/index.shtml)

Lyris email alert list:

[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/resources/email\\_subscriptions/swrcb\\_subscribe.shtml](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/resources/email_subscriptions/swrcb_subscribe.shtml)

