

Triggering State Intervention

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

Under a limited set of circumstances, the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) may step in to help protect local groundwater resources. The process of State Water Board intervention is sometimes referred to as the State Backstop or State Intervention, and only occurs when local efforts are not successful. State Intervention requirements remain in place until local efforts are able to sustainably manage groundwater resources.

The following table lists the events that could trigger State Intervention:

Date	Intervention Trigger
After June 30, 2017	No Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) formed.
After January 31, 2020	In high- or medium-priority basins in a condition of critical overdraft: 1) No sustainability plan has been adopted, or 2) The Department of Water Resources (DWR), in consultation with the State Water Board, finds that the sustainability plan or its implementation is inadequate.
After January 31, 2022	In other high- or medium-priority basins: 1) No sustainability plan has been adopted, or 2) DWR, in consultation with the State Water Board, finds the sustainability plan or its implementation is inadequate, and the State Water Board finds that the basin is in a condition of long-term overdraft.
After January 31, 2025	DWR, in consultation with the State Water Board, finds that the sustainability plan is inadequate or the plan is not being implemented in a manner that is likely to achieve the sustainability goal, and the State Water Board finds there are significant depletions of interconnected surface waters.

The earliest the State Water Board can implement the State Intervention is 2017, when local agencies in high- and medium-priority basins must form GSAs. If local agencies fail to form a GSA by July 1, 2017 local groundwater users must begin reporting groundwater use to the State Water Board.

When an intervention trigger occurs, the State Water Board may, in consultation with DWR and through a public process, identify groundwater basins as probationary and develop interim sustainability plans for those basins. The interim plan remains in effect until the State Water Board finds that local efforts will likely achieve groundwater sustainability.

More information at www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gmp/sgma.shtml#backstop.



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