

**COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
AGENDA ITEM TRANSMITTAL**

(1) DEPARTMENT Public Works	(2) MEETING DATE 1/13/2015	(3) CONTACT/PHONE Mark Hutchinson, Deputy Director (805) 781-5458	
(4) SUBJECT Submittal of a Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy. All Districts.			
(5) RECOMMENDED ACTION It is recommended that the Board, acting as both the Board of Supervisors for the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and for the County of San Luis Obispo, adopt the attached Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy, and direct staff to implement the policy as written.			
(6) FUNDING SOURCE(S) Flood Control General	(7) CURRENT YEAR FINANCIAL IMPACT \$50,000.00	(8) ANNUAL FINANCIAL IMPACT \$150,000.00	(9) BUDGETED? Yes
(10) AGENDA PLACEMENT { } Consent    { } Presentation    { } Hearing (Time Est. ____ ) <b>{X}</b> Board Business (Time Est. 45 min)			
(11) EXECUTED DOCUMENTS { } Resolutions    { } Contracts    { } Ordinances <b>{X}</b> N/A			
(12) OUTLINE AGREEMENT REQUISITION NUMBER (OAR) N/A		(13) BUDGET ADJUSTMENT REQUIRED? BAR ID Number: N/A { } 4/5 Vote Required <b>{X}</b> N/A	
(14) LOCATION MAP N/A	(15) BUSINESS IMPACT STATEMENT? No	(16) AGENDA ITEM HISTORY <b>{X}</b> N/A Date: _____	
(17) ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE REVIEW <i>Nikki J. Schmidt</i>			
(18) SUPERVISOR DISTRICT(S) All Districts			

Reference: 15JAN13-BB-2

# County of San Luis Obispo



TO: Board of Supervisors

FROM: Public Works  
Mark Hutchinson, Deputy Director of Public Works

VIA: Wade Horton, Director of Public Works

DATE: 1/13/2015

SUBJECT: Submittal of a Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy.  
All Districts.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that the Board, acting as both the Board of Supervisors for the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District and for the County of San Luis Obispo, adopt the attached Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy, and direct staff to implement the policy as written.

## **DISCUSSION**

California Senate Bills 1168 (Pavley) and 1319 (Pavley), and Assembly Bill 1739 (Dickinson), signed by the Governor in September 2014, together comprise the "Sustainable Groundwater Management Act" (SGMA). SGMA is ground breaking in that it requires local agencies to manage groundwater "...in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing undesirable results"<sup>1</sup>. SGMA, which took effect on January 1, 2015, provides for the preparation and implementation of Groundwater Sustainability Plans for all water basins in the State<sup>2</sup>, with High and Medium priority basins placed on a statutory schedule for identification of a Groundwater Sustainability Agency/Agencies (GSA), development of a Groundwater Sustainability Plan/Plans (GSP), and achieving sustainability. Based on the 2014 Final Basin Prioritization by the State Department of Water Resources (DWR), there are five high and medium priority groundwater basins mapped in San Luis Obispo County:

1. Paso Robles (High)
2. Santa Maria (High)
3. Los Osos (High)
4. San Luis (Edna) Valley (Medium)
5. Cuyama Valley (Medium)

---

<sup>1</sup> CA Water Code Section 10721(u)

<sup>2</sup> Groundwater basins and basin boundaries are defined by the State Department of Water Resources in Bulletin 118

## Overarching Strategy

SGMA establishes the GSA process whereby local public agencies may organize themselves for the purpose of achieving sustainable groundwater management for the benefit of the community in and for the long term. Therefore, the overarching strategy is to:

**Establish community focused GSA's based on cooperative interagency and stakeholder relationships in order to comply with Sustainable Groundwater Management Act requirements.**

This strategy focuses first and foremost on building GSAs with willing and eligible partner agencies, as defined in SGMA, as the first and key step. GSAs should be organized with the understanding that all other actions required under SGMA will be accomplished either through the GSA or as a result of the groundwater sustainability plan prepared by the GSA.

The strategy also describes:

- GSA organizational agreements that are intended to further the development and approval of the Groundwater Sustainability Plans, acknowledging the potential need to amend or replace the agreement once the details of the groundwater sustainability plans are known.
- Groundwater Sustainability Plans defined by the conditions present in each groundwater basin, along with the benefits provided by that water. No “one size fits all”.
- Maximum feasible outreach to all potentially affected stakeholders.
- First priority for staff and funding resources are those basins designated by the State as high and medium priority, with efforts invested in additional groundwater basins as capacity is available.
- A pay-as-you go funding approach focused on developing GSAs coupled with the maximum feasible funding through grant applications.
- Staffing levels to be considered within the context of the Board's existing strategic planning and budgeting framework.
- A schedule driven by the requirements of SGMA:

<b>When</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>What</b>
January 1, 2016	CA Department of Water Resources	Adopt regulations for basin boundary adjustments
June 1, 2016	CA Department of Water Resources	Adopt regulations for evaluating GSPs and GSA agreements
January 1, 2017	CA Department of Water Resources	Publish groundwater sustainability best management practices
June 30, 2017	Local agencies in Medium & High Priority Basins	Establish GSAs
January 31, 2020	GSAs in medium- and high-priority basins in critical overdraft	Adopt GSPs and begin managing basins under GSPs
January 31, 2022	GSAs in other medium- and high- priority basins	Adopt GSPs and begin managing basins under GSPs
January 31, 2040	GSAs in medium- and high-priority basins in critical overdraft	Achieve groundwater sustainability goals
January 31, 2042	GSAs in other medium- and high- priority basins	Achieve groundwater sustainability goals

### **OTHER AGENCY INVOLVEMENT/IMPACT**

Implementation of SGMA will involve all public agencies, private water companies, and landowners concerned with the management of groundwater in San Luis Obispo County. Although SGMA specifies that local public agencies are the key members of a GSA, stakeholder outreach requirements, coordination requirements, and the practical realities of preparing a Groundwater Sustainability Plan, require the involvement of the entire community.

County Counsel has reviewed the attached Strategy and provided comments as to its clarity and consistency with the requirements of SGMA.

### **FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Existing budget, primarily that of the San Luis Obispo County Flood Control and Water Conservation District general fund, are likely sufficient to initiate agency and stakeholder outreach necessary to form the initial GSA's. In the longer term, costs associated with fully developing the information necessary to prepare a GSP will depend on the level of involvement of the GSA partner agencies, the amount of information already available in a particular groundwater basin, and the level of investment required to reach stakeholder agreement. Cost sharing agreements with other GSA partner agencies will be sought, along with competing for any grant funds offered by the State. Estimated cost for this work effort could range up to \$250,000 per year until 2022.

### **RESULTS**

Adopting the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy will provide a foundation for all subsequent actions and activities necessary to comply with SGMA; provide other agencies and the public a clear statement regarding the Board's intentions for implementing SGMA; and provide direction to County staff, thereby contributing to a well governed community.

File: CF 340.300.01 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

Reference: 15JAN13-BB-2

L:\MANAGMNT\JAN15\BOS\2015.01.13 BoS SGMA Rpt brd ltr 001.docx.mh.taw

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Strategy