

March 2025 DWR Updates (from DWR's North Central Region Office)

Grants

California Grants Portal

The California State Library, in partnership with the Department of Water Resources and other state grantmaking agencies, has launched the California Grants Portal – your one destination to find all state grant and loan opportunities provided on a first-come or competitive basis. Visit grants.ca.gov to find funding opportunities for you and your community.

DWR's Underrepresented Communities and Small Farmer Technical Assistance Program

The mission of the Program is to determine the needs, risks, and vulnerabilities with the implementation of the SGMA for underrepresented communities and small farms in medium and high priority basins, including critically overdrafted (COD) basins. The types of services provided include, but are not limited to: Groundwater level monitoring; Aquifer testing to determine long-term yield and supply; Identifying Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs); Analyze well interference; Identifying additional water supply; Analyze existing well condition using downhole video log; Rehabilitation of water storage tank; Long-term water supply and demand analysis; Analyze and help to facilitate water transfers. **More information is available on the webpage.** **Local entities can request services by emailing SGM_TA@water.ca.gov.**

CNRA California Climate Bond: Grant Programs Feedback survey

If you would like to provide input on how the Prop 4 grant programs will be administered, please take a moment to [fill out this survey](#). The survey is aimed at past and future grantees. **Please note that the survey closes on April 18, 2025, at 5pm.**

Upcoming conferences, webinars, new reports and data

DWR Releases Second and Third Paper on Depletions of Interconnected Surface Water

To help GSAs address the depletion of interconnected surface water (ISW) in their Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs), the DWR released the second and third in a series of three draft papers that discuss the technical aspects of ISW and quantification of depletions of ISW caused by groundwater pumping. The first paper (Paper 1), [Depletions of Interconnected Surface Water: An Introduction](#), introduced concepts associated with ISW, including approaches for identifying ISW and defining depletion of ISW from groundwater pumping. The second paper (Paper 2), [Techniques for Estimating Interconnected Surface Water Depletion Caused by Groundwater Use](#), continues the foundational concepts presented in Paper 1 by discussing the data requirements, methods, and general implementation process to consider for ISW depletion analyses. The final paper (Paper 3), [Examples for Estimating Interconnected Surface Water Depletion Caused by Groundwater Use](#), continues and expands upon the topics presented in Paper 2 by providing detailed examples of using numerical models to evaluate depletion of ISW. A pre-recorded webinar that summarizes the contents of the three papers and describes the next steps in the development of the guidance document [can be viewed here](#).

DWR Releases Groundwater Recharge Guidance Documents

DWR has developed an [On-Farm Recharge Methods Manual](#), [District Recharge Program Guidance](#) and [Central Valley Groundwater Recharge Incentives and Strategies](#). The On-Farm Recharge Methods Manual, a summary of strategies and challenges. This document gathers observations and lessons learned from over a decade of Sustainable Conservation working directly with growers and irrigation districts to implement on-farm recharge, including methods to enhance recharge, avoid crop health problems, manage recharge events, and minimize nutrient leaching. This document summarizes in-field practices with 10 grower case studies to provide practical information about on-farm recharge from growers to growers.

The two guidance documents will help water districts, Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs), and their technical consultants design and implement effective multi-benefit recharge programs and projects. These documents include a summary of necessary considerations, publicly available tools, and examples to design new or refine existing recharge and incentive programs that address the specific needs and priorities in a subbasin.

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DWR permit portal for Delta Conveyance Project

DWR has a [permit portal](#) to help with plans and projects for the [Delta Conveyance Project](#). The portal includes access to information and resources related to some of the more critical environmental [compliance and permitting processes](#). The new website has all relevant California Environmental Quality Act information, along with the [final environmental impact report](#). [Fact sheets](#) are available in English, Spanish and Chinese and cover topics such as soil testing, seismic resilience and project features. Several companion [videos](#) are also now available. **A Final EIR for the proposed Delta Conveyance Project was issued and approved in December of 2023.**

Now that the environmental review is complete and the project has been approved, DWR will take the next steps to pursue numerous state and federal permits or authorizations, including those required by the State Water Resources Control Board, the Delta Stewardship Council, and compliance with state and federal Endangered Species acts. DWR will also continue to develop a Community Benefits Program. The Delta Construction Authority will provide a new cost estimate and a benefit-cost analysis in mid-2024.

- SWRCB public hearings on the Delta Conveyance project scheduled for the following dates: 2/18/25, March 24 & 25, April 1, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 14, 17, 22, 23, & 24, and June 10 & 11 2025, and additional dates as necessary. These hearing will address the water rights change petition to add two new points of diversion and will be accepting public comment. The State Water Board will use the evidence presented during the hearing to determine whether to approve these petitions, and if so, what specific terms and conditions (if any) should be included in the amended State Water Project permits. [More info here](#).
- The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has transmitted to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) an [Operations Plan for the Delta Conveyance Project](#) (Project) describing Project operations
- The Department of Water Resources has released a [Discussion Draft Implementation Plan and Guidelines](#) for the Delta Conveyance Project's Community Benefits Program (CBP). The implementation plan provides more detail about how the CBP could be implemented and is **available for review through March 1, 2025.**

California's Groundwater Live: Up-to-date data on groundwater conditions, well installations and subsidence

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) released the final [California's Groundwater – Update 2020 \(Bulletin-118\)](#), containing information on the condition of the State's groundwater, DWR has also developed a companion web-based application called [California's Groundwater Live](#) (CalGW Live), leveraging the [California Natural Resources Agency Open Data Platform](#) (Open Data) to improve the access and timeliness of statewide groundwater information. The easy-to-use interface will make many of the data sets used in CalGW Update 2020 available in an interactive map format that will be updated regularly for viewing and downloading. For more information, visit the updated [California's Groundwater website](#) Contact: CalGW@water.ca.gov.

The Department of Water Resources (DWR) has released the [Fall 2024 Semi-Annual Groundwater Conditions Update](#), which provides a look back at groundwater conditions following California's historic 2023 Water Year and an average 2024 Water Year. It also summarizes groundwater conditions over the first 10 years of Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) Implementation (2014-2024).

SGMA & Drought

Update Your GSA and GSP Manager Point of Contact Information in DWR's SGMA Portal

If your GSA and/or GSP Plan Manager Point of Contact (POC) is not current, or you are not sure, please visit the SGMA Portal to ensure that your contact information is up-to-date. When logged in, the Portal allows edits to be made to previously submitted contact information. If you have SGMA Portal questions, please email them to GSPSubmittal@water.ca.gov.

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Governor Newsom issues Executive Order N-16-25

Governor Newsom today signed Executive Order N-16-25, which set forth the conditions under which water users may divert and store excess water from incoming winter storms. **Specifically, the Executive Order suspends the local flood plan requirement of Water Code 1242.1, which codified many elements of the previous 2023 Flood Executive Orders and allows for diversions of flood flows for recharge without water rights.** The State Water Resources Control Board has updated its [1242.1 Technical Guidance](#) that provides additional details of the existing 1242.1 requirements and addresses today's Executive Order. For more information on the Executive Order: [Release Information](#) and [Executive Order](#)

Public Comment Period Open for Periodic Evaluations and Amendments of Groundwater Sustainability Plans

Periodic Evaluations of groundwater sustainability plan (GSP) implementation for Paso Robles Area, Santa Cruz-Mid-County, North and South Yuba, Cuyama Valley, Eastern San Joaquin, Madera, Kings, Merced, 180/400 Foot Aquifer, Las Posas Valley, Westside, Pleasant Valley, and Oxnard basins have recently been submitted to the Department of Water Resources, some of which include amended GSPs, are now posted on the [SGMA Portal](#). **A 75-day public comment period is being held for these Periodic Evaluations and amended GSPs (ending 4/20/25).** A public comment button is available on the corresponding Periodic Evaluation SGMA Portal page and corresponding Amended GSP SGMA Portal page. Public comments are welcomed and encouraged. A SGMA Portal account is not necessary to submit comments.

Basin Characterization Exchange

DWR's Basin Characterization Program has launched the [Basin Characterization Exchange](#) (BCX). The BCX is a public meeting and network space for the Basin Characterization community to exchange ideas, share lessons learned, define needed guidance, and highlight research topics. BCX meetings will also include regular updates from the Basin Characterization Program and provide participants with early opportunities to test tools and submit comments on guidance documents. The BCX is open to federal, state, and local agencies, consultants, community-based and non-governmental organizations, academia, and interested parties who participate in Basin Characterization efforts. **Those interested in getting updates and announcement the BCX should email their name and information to Basin.Characterization@water.ca.gov.** A kickoff meeting was be co-hosted with Lunch-MAR on March 5th and [the recording can be seen here](#). The next meeting will be held April 22, 2025 from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m.

DWR Releases Frequently Asked Questions: Department's Role in State Intervention under SGMA

The Department of Water Resources (Department, DWR) has released a frequently asked questions document to address inquiries from groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) and the public at large, on the Department's role and responsibilities when a basin is subject to State Water Resources Control Board (Board) jurisdiction and state intervention under Chapter 11 of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). DWR today released its [Frequently Asked Questions: Department's Role in State Intervention](#) responding to the most frequently asked questions, found on [DWR's GSP website](#), which includes additional information on DWR's GSP evaluation, Annual Reports, the GSP Regulations, and more.

Projects and Management Actions (PMA) Module for GSP reporting

DWR is developing a new PMA module as part of the SGMA portal. DWR staff are entering the initial data based on GSPs and annual reports and will be reaching out to GSA's to QA the information prior to it going live around the end of October. The PMA Module is intended to assist agencies in satisfying the requirements of SGMA by providing a central location to track, document, and annually report on progress made toward implementing PMAs. A recording of a recent [webinar is available on DWR's YouTube channel](#). Questions can be directed to sgmps@water.ca.gov.

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[2023 Provisional Statewide Crop Mapping data](#) was released in December of 2024 and the final 2022 data set was released March of 2025. The data sets include multi-cropping information. The provisional datasets includes agricultural land use and urban boundaries for all 58 counties in California. The data can now be accessed at the following locations: [CA DWR Land Use Viewer](#) (viewing and downloading); [CNRA Webpage](#) (viewing and downloading); on the [SGMA Data Viewer](#) (viewing) and the [California State Geoportal](#) (viewing and downloading).

InSAR subsidence data is now available [through July 1 of 2024](#) and can now be viewed on the [SGMA data viewer](#). The updated GIS services and data reports are also available [online](#).

Facilitation Support Services (FSS): [Funding still available](#)

- GSA's developing GSPs are eligible to receive funding for identification and engagement of interested parties, meeting facilitation, interest-based negotiation/consensus building, and public outreach facilitation
- More information [can be found here](#). [Written translation services available in 8 languages for outreach materials \(5,000 word maximum\)](#).
- DWR has [Verbal Interpretation service available to GSA's](#). Real-time interpretive services are available to GSAs for virtual, hybrid, or in-person meetings in support of GSP implementation with the goal of engaging underrepresented communities within basins and encouraging equal access for non-fluent English speakers during the implementation of GSP's. If you are interested in learning more or receiving support from an interpretation team email sgmps@water.ca.gov.

Reminders: Drought and SGMA related tools & guidance

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation Guidance

On October 30, 2023, DWR released its [Groundwater Sustainability Plan Implementation: A Guide to Annual Reports, Periodic Evaluations, and Plan Amendments](#), which provides guidance to GSAs preparing these documents under SGMA and the GSP Regulations. The Department also released a [Frequently Asked Questions and Available Resources](#) document that provides commonly asked questions and answers about Annual Reports, Periodic Evaluations, and GSP Amendments. These resources do not create any requirements or obligations for GSAs; the information is intended to clarify the necessary content of the documents already required by SGMA and the GSP Regulations.

'Be Well Prepared' Initiative and Website

May 17, 2023, DWR released the [Be Well Prepared initiative](#). DWR is providing tools and resources to help communities that are dependent on groundwater and experiencing climate-driven weather extremes, to prepare for potential impacts to household water supplies. The Be Well Prepared initiative focuses on domestic well owners and residents that use and maintain their well. [The website includes resources and information](#) that every well owner should know and understand about: groundwater conditions, well maintenance, water quality, assistance, and additional articles, videos and resources. A [new flyer](#) from DWR provides the four initial steps for well owners to take if they think their well has gone dry. This flyer is also available in [Spanish](#) and [Hmong](#).

SB552: DWR's Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool

As part of its technical assistance to support SB 552 implementation, DWR developed the [Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool](#) to provide the foundational data and information statewide to counties for their water shortage risk assessment.

Dry Well Susceptibility Map

The DWR, in coordination with the State Water Resources Control Board, has developed an interactive mapping tool, called the Dry Well Susceptibility Tool. This tool identifies areas within groundwater basins that may be

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prone to water supply shortages in drinking water wells. State and local agencies and well owners can use this tool to anticipate where wells may go dry based on historical conditions to inform drought preparedness decision-making. To use this tool, navigate to [California's Groundwater Live website](#) and click the [Dry Domestic Well Susceptibility tab](#). A fact sheet on this tool, as well as DWR's Dry Well Reporting System, [is available here](#).

Dry Well Reporting Site

There is a website available to [report private wells going dry](#). Information reported to this site is intended to inform state and local agencies on drought impacts on household water supplies. The data reported on this site (excluding personal identifiable information) can be viewed on the [SGMA data viewer](#) or downloaded on the [CNRA Atlas](#). Individuals or local agencies can report water shortages and [a list of resources are included on the webpage](#). The reporting forms are available in both English and Spanish. Local agencies can now sign up to receive notifications of any dry wells reported in their area. To sign up please email sgmps@water.ca.gov.