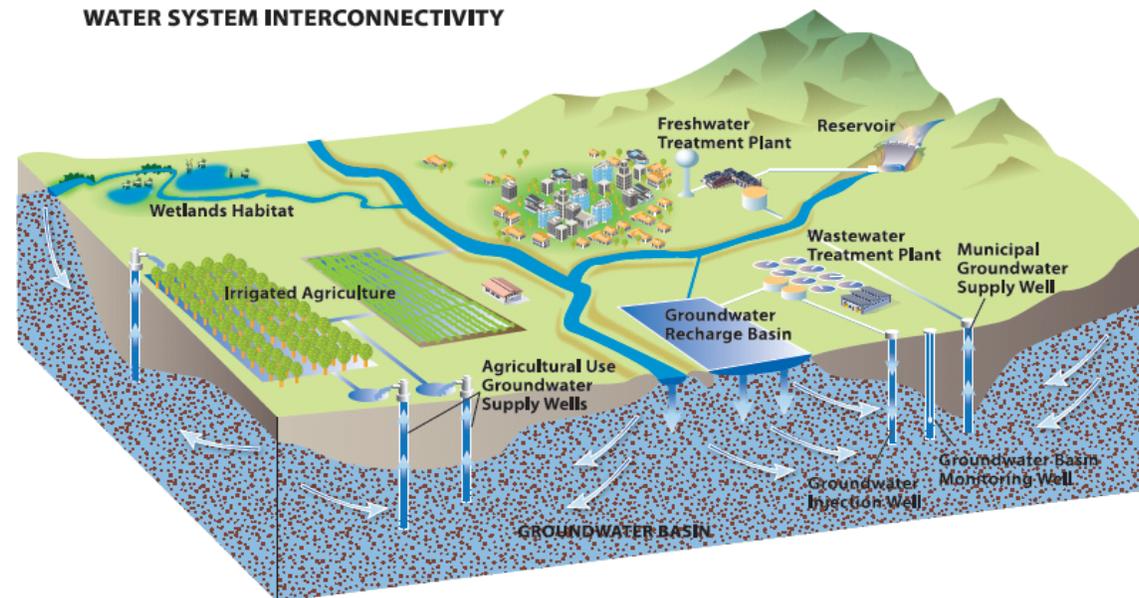


# Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014

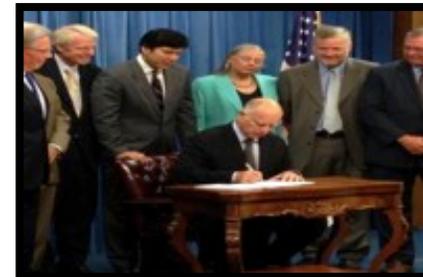
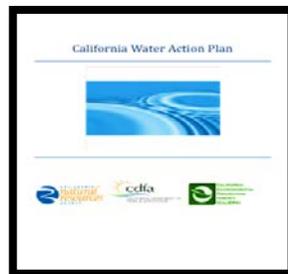
Jay Jasperse

Chief Engineer & Director of Groundwater Management, Sonoma County Water Agency



# 2014 - The Year of Water

- Historic drought
- Governor's Water Action Plan
- Voters pass Proposition 1, \$7.5 billion water bond
- Historic groundwater legislation



# A Framework for Sustainability

- Emphasis on local control
- 20 years to achieve sustainability
- State intervenes only if we don't act locally
- New act is one component of integrated state policy that includes:
  - Conservation
  - Recycling
  - Safe drinking water
  - Storage
  - Watershed restoration



# Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

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## Step one

Local agencies must form local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) within 2 1/2 years

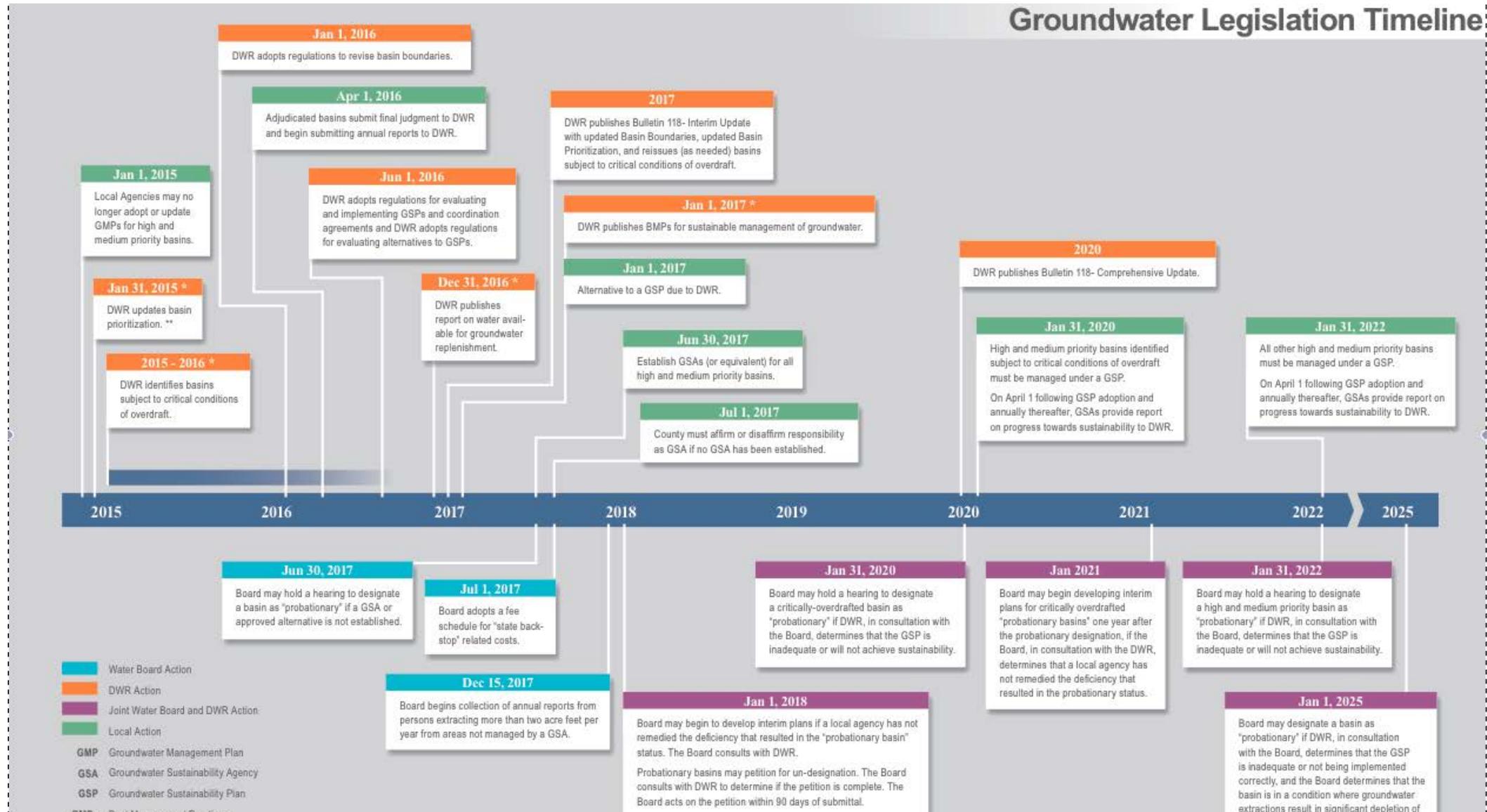
## Step two

Agencies in high- or medium-priority basins must adopt groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) within five to seven years, depending on whether in critical overdraft

## Step three

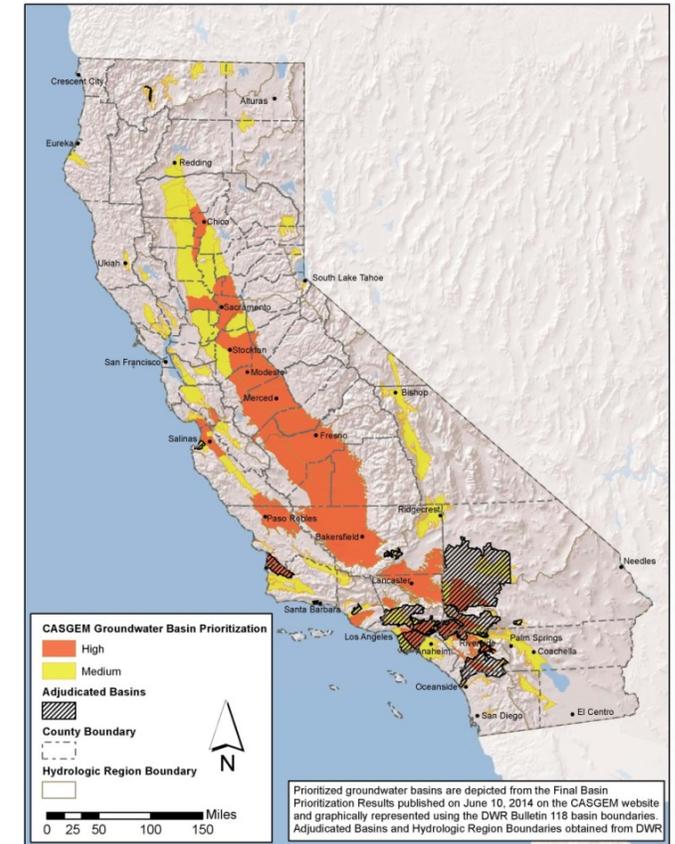
Once plans are in place, local agencies have 20 years to fully implement them and achieve the sustainability goal

# Groundwater Legislation Timeline



# High and Medium Priority Basins

- Designated or reprioritized by DWR by January 31, 2015
- Medium priority: Santa Rosa Plain, Sonoma Valley, Petaluma
- Criteria: Population, irrigated agriculture using groundwater, etc.
- 125 of 515 basins statewide expected to be medium/high
- SGMA is elective for low priority basins



# Groundwater Plays Important Role in Building Resiliency



Alexander Valley Study Completed 2006

Sonoma County Water Agency Transmission System - Connecting Surface & Groundwater

Santa Rosa Plain Study: Completed 2014

Sonoma Valley Study Completed 2006

**Overarching Goal:** Proactive Management of Surface Water & Groundwater Resources to Promote Reliability for All Users

Petaluma Valley Study Initiated Sept 2014

# What Is Sustainable Management?

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

- Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating significant and unreasonable depletion
- Reductions in groundwater storage
- Seawater intrusion
- Degraded water quality
- Land subsidence
- Surface water depletions that adversely impact beneficial uses

# Sustainable Management: Supply and Demand

- Groundwater supply can be increased through recharge or supplemented with surface water
- Conjunctive management with surface water supplies can increase groundwater sustainability
- Managing groundwater demand
  - Conservation and water efficiency
  - Good land use planning and well construction policies
  - Limiting groundwater use

# New Management Tools

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) are empowered to:

- Conduct studies
- Register and monitor groundwater wells
- Require reports of groundwater extraction
- Regulate groundwater extractions
- Implement capital projects to meet goals
- Assess fees to cover cost of groundwater management
- Some requirements do not apply to small groundwater users



# The Land-Use Planning Connections

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## GSAs must:

- Notify cities, county of hearings to adopt a plan
- Take into account assumptions from general plans
- Be consistent with general plans if adopting any regulations on groundwater extraction, unless ...

## GSAs may:

- Request notification of new well permits
- Adopt spacing requirements for new wells

## GSAs cannot:

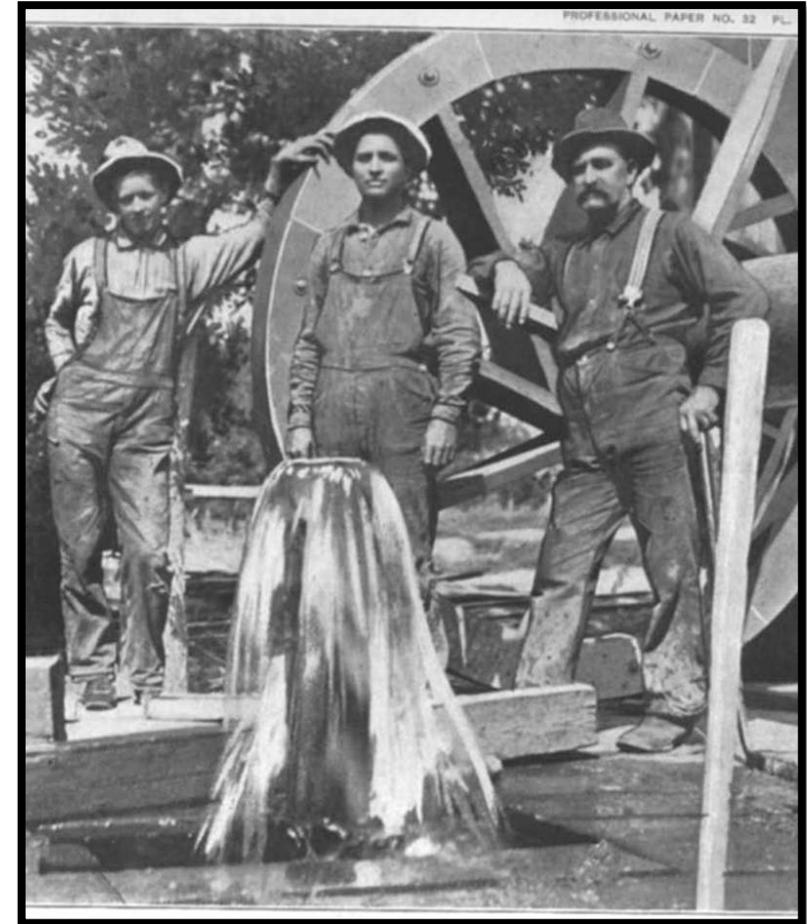
- Supersede land use authority of cities and counties

# The Land-Use Planning Connection

Land-use planning agencies must:

- Notify GSAs of any proposal to substantially amend a general plan
- Consider any adopted groundwater plan when amending the general plan

Other possible areas of coordination include: Well permitting, riparian corridors, recharge areas, development permitting, CEQA documents



# Forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

- Any local agency or combination of agencies overlying a basin may form a GSA
- A local agency does at least one of the following:
  - Water supply
  - Water management
  - Land use
- Counties are the default GSA in “uncovered areas”
- Formation deadline: June 30, 2017



# Creating Groundwater Sustainability Plans

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- Local options
  - Create one plan that covers entire basin
  - Coordinate multiple plans created by different agencies
- Plan requirements
  - Measurable objectives/milestones to meet sustainability goal
  - Physical description of basin, including:
    - Groundwater levels, water quality, subsidence, groundwater-surface water interaction, supply & demand
- Monitoring & management provisions
- How plan affects other plans

# Key Implementation Dates

Time	Action
June 30, 2017	Formation of GSAs
January 31, 2020	Completion of plans in critically overdrafted basins
January 31, 2022	Completion of plans in all other basins
20 years after adoption of plan	High- and medium-priority basins achieve sustainability

DWR may grant up to two, five-year extensions for implementation upon showing good cause and progress

# Department of Water Resources Role

- Designate basins as high, medium, low or very low priority by Jan. 31, 2015
- Provide technical assistance
- Review GSPs initially and periodically for compliance with Act
  - Multiple plans within a basin must be evaluated collectively
- Evaluate whether one GSP adversely affects adjacent basin's ability to achieve sustainability goal



# State Water Resources Control Board Role

- May intervene if GSA not formed or fails to adopt and implement compliant plan
- Designate “probationary status” if deficiencies not addressed
  - Create interim plan for basin until local GSA can assume responsibility
  - Probationary status requires a GSA to respond to SWRCB and describe how it intends to rectify deficiencies



# Other Key Points

- Legislative intent to “respect overlying and other proprietary rights to groundwater”
- Act does not change existing surface water rights or groundwater rights
- Water Bond includes \$100 million for groundwater sustainability



# Next Steps

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- Water Agency/County work group: Investigate governance options, develop outreach plan & report to Board in early 2015
- Initiate discussions with community stakeholders, agriculture, cities, water districts & other water users
- Continue implementation existing groundwater management plans
  - Santa Rosa Plain - focus on community outreach & monitoring
  - Sonoma Valley - address groundwater declines & increased salinity
- Increase community awareness of impacts of SGMA
- Monitor follow-up legislation

# Questions?

Contact Jay Jasperse

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707.547.1959

Materials provided by the Association of California Water Agencies and the Groundwater Resource Association were invaluable in the creation of this presentation

