

Working Draft
For TAC Discussion

Possible Institutional-Regulatory Alternatives to Address Groundwater Depletion

Baseline	
No Action Alternative	Considers the costs and consequences of not taking action – no changes to current practices.
Build on Adopted County General Plan Policies	
Groundwater Availability Map	Originally based on CA Geologic Survey Special Report 120, Geology for Planning in Sonoma County 1980. Work with PRMD to update the Groundwater Availability Map with more recent data published by USGS and SVGMP for use in land use planning decisions.
Policy WR-1t	Where area studies or monitoring find that saltwater intrusion has occurred, support analysis of how the intrusion is related to groundwater extraction and support development of a groundwater management plan or other appropriate measures to avoid further intrusion and, where practicable, reverse past intrusion.
Policy WR-1u	“In the marshlands and agricultural areas south of Sonoma and Petaluma require all environmental assessment and discretionary approvals to analyze and, where practicable, avoid any increase in saltwater intrusion into groundwater.” Possible action:
Goal WR-2	“Manage groundwater as a valuable and limited resource. “
Policy WR-2c	“Work with well drillers and other parties familiar with groundwater conditions in Sonoma County to develop well permit standards...” <i>Possible action:</i> Work with PRMD and provide input on Draft Ordinance for well permits and procedures.
Policy WR-2d	“Continue the existing program to require groundwater monitoring for new or expanded discretionary commercial and industrial uses using wells. Where justified by the monitoring program, establish additional monitoring requirements for other new wells. Possible action: Work with PRMD to specify areas where additional discretionary monitoring might be considered for new wells in depletion zones.
Policy WR-2i	As part of the first annual report, consider the recommendations of the recently completed

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	groundwater studies in the Joy Road, Mark West Springs, and Bennett Valley areas, as well as the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Management Plan.
Policy WR-2j	Cooperate with the incorporated Cities, SCWA, DWR, US Geological Survey, well drillers, and all water users and purveyors in the development of a comprehensive groundwater assessment for each major groundwater basin in the county and the priorities, sequence and timing for such studies. Prepare such assessments to meet the applicable requirements of the California Water Code for a “groundwater management plan” etc. If a basin assessment indicates that future groundwater availability, water quality and surface water flows may be threatened and there may be a need for additional management actions to address groundwater problems, prepare a plan for managing groundwater supplies which may require limitations on water extraction and use and other special standards for allowed development, wells, extraction or use, etc.
Policy WR-2e	“Requirements for proof of groundwater and test wells in Groundwater Availability Map Class 3 & 4 areas” including hydrogeologic report that establish groundwater quality and quantity.” Possible action: Assess expansion of areas where “proof of available groundwater” is required, and may be linked to the update of the Groundwater Availability Map.
Possible Institutional Approaches	
Benefit Assessment District	An involuntary charge that property owners pay for a public improvement or service that provides a special benefit to their property. The amount of the assessment is directly related to the amount of the benefit their property receives.
Irrigation District	May control, distribute, store, spread, sink, treat, purify, recapture and salvage any water including but not limited to sewage waters for the beneficial use or uses of the district or its inhabitants or the owners of rights to waters therein.
Water Conservation District	May conserve, store, spread, and sink water and for such purposes may acquire or construct dams, damsites, reservoirs and reservoir sites, canals, ditches and conduits, spreading basins, sinking wells, and sinking basins, and may sell, deliver, distribute, or otherwise dispose of any water that may be stored or appropriated, owned, or controlled by the district.
Water Replenishment District	Within or outside of the district to construct, purchase, lease, or otherwise acquire, and to operate and maintain necessary waterworks and other works, machinery and facilities,

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	canals, conduits, waters, water rights, spreading grounds, lands, rights and privileges useful or necessary to replenish the underground water basin within the district, or to augment the common water supplies of the district.
Expand Existing Institutions	Geographic jurisdictional expansion of existing institutions.
Hybrid	Combination of some of the above.
Other	Include other options if available.
Possible Legislative Amendments to AB3030	Current discussions by the Governor's Administration, the State Legislature and groundwater industry leadership indicate the need for and general agreement that groundwater management needs improvement statewide. Legislation may include additional requirements and authorities for Groundwater Management Plans.