

Groundwater Sustainability Agency Formation Update

City Council – Study Session
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Our mission:

Protecting public health
by sustaining water
resources, infrastructure
and the environment



Presentation Outline

- Santa Rosa Groundwater Background
- SGMA Requirements
- GSA Eligible Entities
- GSA Formation – Staff Discussion
- Next Steps



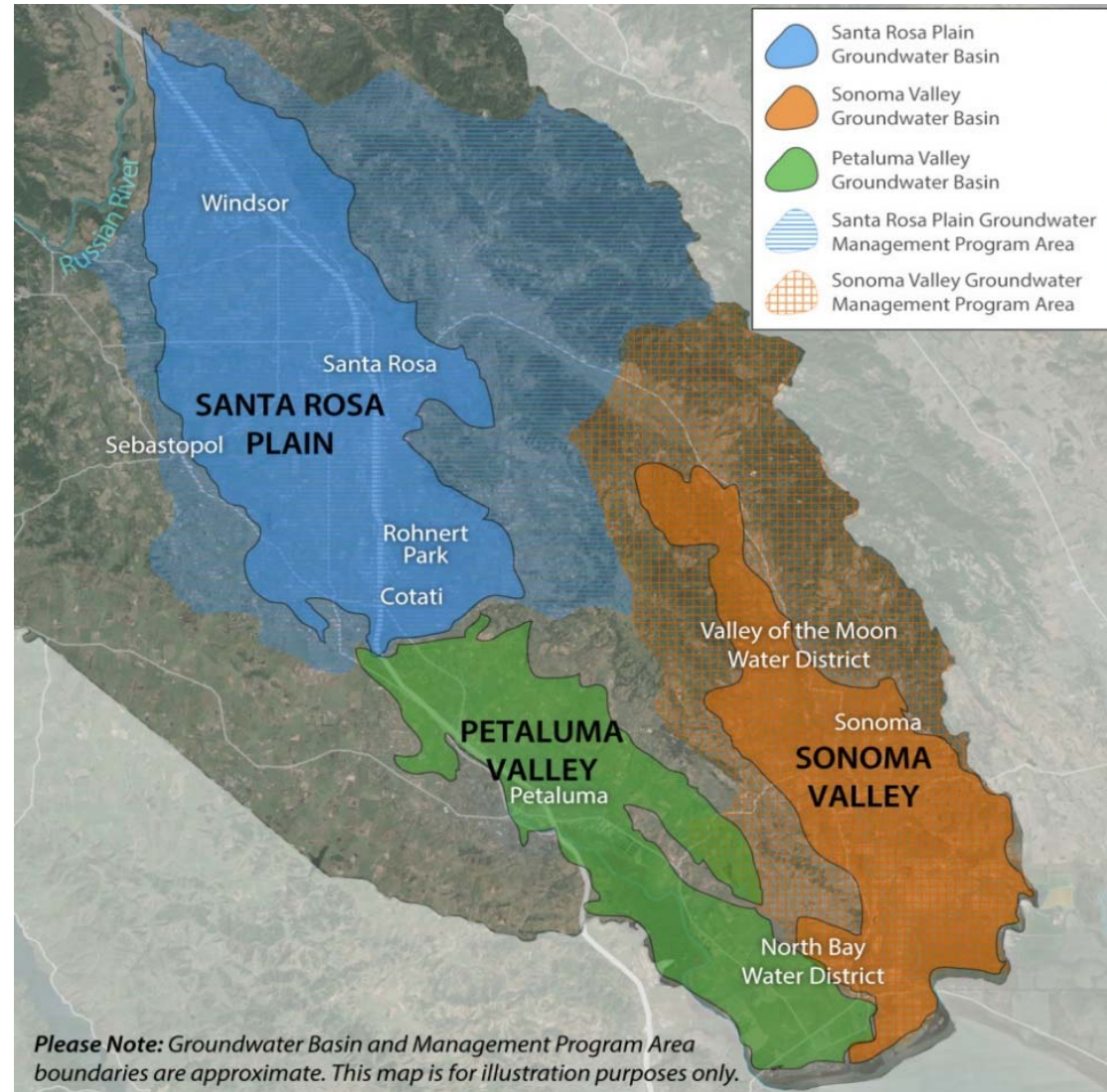
Santa Rosa Groundwater Background

- Groundwater provides 5-10% annual water supply
 - Farmers Lane Wells
- 2013 – Santa Rosa GW Master Plan completed
 - Strategic direction for sustainable groundwater use
 - Emergency Groundwater Supply Program



SGMA

- Became law 1/1/2015
- Applies statewide to medium and high priority basins
- Applies to three basins in Sonoma County



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Required Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

Step one

Form
Groundwater
Sustainability
Agency
June 30, 2017

Step two

Develop
Groundwater
Sustainability
Plan
January 31, 2022

Step three

Achieve
Sustainability
20 years after
adoption of
plan*

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



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What will the GSA do?

Manage groundwater without causing *undesirable results* (as defined by SGMA)

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



GSA authorities per SGMA

GSA at their discretion are empowered to:

- Conduct studies
- Register and monitor wells
- Require groundwater extraction reports
- Regulate groundwater extractions
- Implement capital projects to meet goals
- Assess fees to cover cost of groundwater management



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Land-Use Planning Connections

GSAAs must:

- Notify cities, county of hearings to adopt plan
- Incorporate and maintain consistency w/ general plan assumptions

GSAAs may:

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

GSAAs cannot:

- Supersede land use authority of cities/county



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GSA Eligible Entities

- Each agency must have one of the following authorities:
 - Water supply
 - Water management
 - Land Use
- Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin - Santa Rosa, Rohnert Park, Cotati, Windsor, Sebastopol, SCWA, County, Sonoma Resource Conservation District
- County is the default in “uncovered areas”



GSA Formation Background

2015

- Stakeholder Assessment completed
- Staff Working Group created of countywide GSA-eligible agencies
- Principles adopted by GSA-eligible entities to commit to working together and with the public
 - City Council Resolution No. 28702
- Public Workshops – Santa Rosa Plain held in Dec



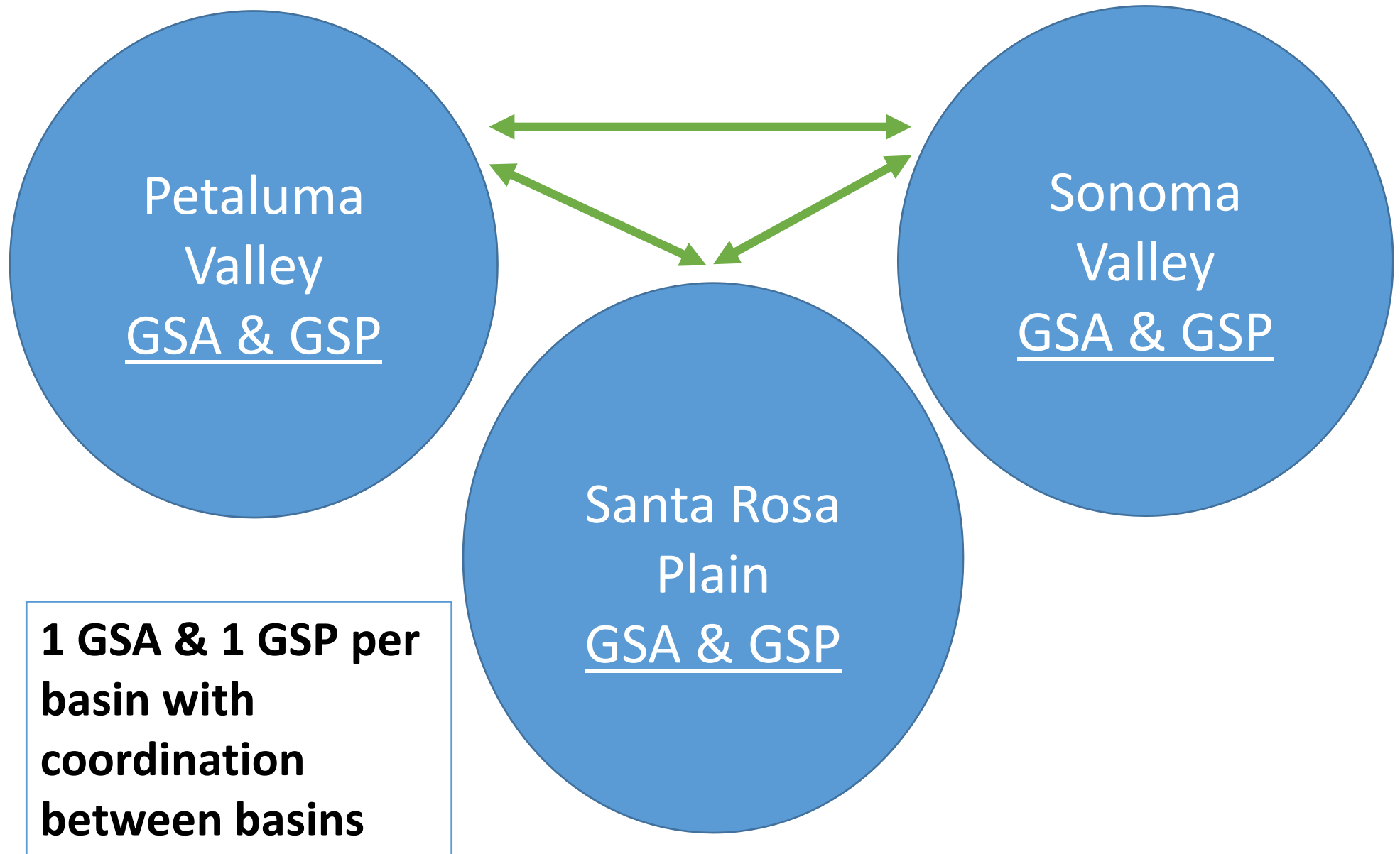
GSA Formation Background

2016

- Website: www.sonomacountygroundwater.org
- Monthly email updates on SGMA activities
- Formal comments on California's GW sustainability plan draft regulations (Spring 2016)
- Received \$250,000 Proposition 1 grant for managing/sharing data across basins and with public
- Public Workshops – Santa Rosa Plain held in July



GSA Framework Structure



GSA – Staff Discussion

- Formation - Joint Powers Agreement (JPA)
- Members – GSA Eligible Entities
- Governing Board – One representative from each GSA Eligible Entity and PUC/Mutual Water Company Representative
- Public Process - GSA will comply with Brown Act



GSA – Staff Discussion

- Voting – Two Tiered
 - One vote per board member
 - First tier – Majority based on topic
 - Unanimous – changes to the JPA
 - Super-Majority – GSP adoption/amendments, annual budget, large capital projects, fees, regulations, policy/legislative advocacy, property acquisition
 - Simple majority – all other topics
 - Second tier – Block voting based on land use authority



GSA – Tiered Voting

Tier 1 Voting by Majority

# Voting	Super Majority	Simple Majority
9	6	5
8	6	5
7	5	4
6	4	4
5 (Quorum)	4	3

+

Tier 2 Block Voting

Land Use Authority
Agencies w/ Land Use Authority 4 of 6 Required for Approval Sonoma County Cotati Rohnert Park Santa Rosa Sebastopol Windsor
Without Land Use Authority 2 of 3 Required for Approval SCWA RCD Mutual/PUC

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Approval

GSA – Advisory Committee

- Purpose: Created for stakeholder input.
- Advise GSA Board on:
 - GSP development & implementation
 - Regulations
 - Fees
 - Capital projects
 - Programs
- Appointments: Formal application process
- Transparency: Public process, Brown Act meetings



GSA – Advisory Committee

- 8 at-large members appointed by each GSA-eligible agency
- Mutual/PUC-regulated water company member
- Interest-based members:
 - 2 environmental representatives
 - 2 agriculture representatives
 - 2 rural residential well owners
 - Business community representative
 - Gold Ridge Resource Conservation District
 - Tribal representatives



Financial Considerations

- Start-Up Funding
 - GSA may require 2-3 years of operation before financially self-sustaining
 - Individual GSA-eligible agencies could provide gap funding or loan funding
 - Methodology to allocate appropriate member costs/risk under development
- Legal Consideration
 - Prop. 218/26
 - Pursuing legal opinion to develop funding strategy



Next Steps

- Staffs from local agencies continue to develop framework and draft JPA
- Consideration of GSA by BPU and Council in 2017
- Form Santa Rosa Plain GSA by July 1, 2017

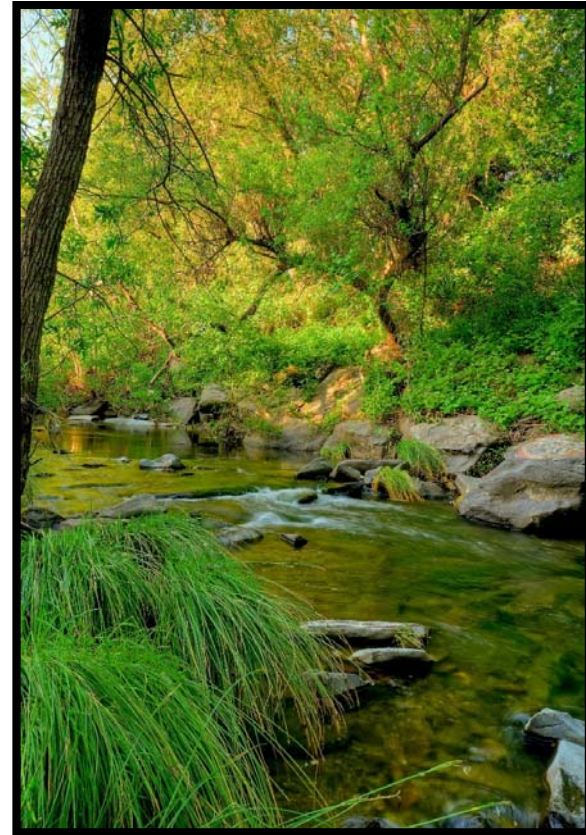


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Thank You

Questions/Comments?



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