

Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)

Principles For Developing Governance Options

City Council
October 20, 2015





Presentation Outline

- ❑ History
- ❑ SGMA Basics
- ❑ Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Formation
- ❑ Basin Boundaries
- ❑ Principles
- ❑ Next Steps
- ❑ Recommendation



Santa Rosa Groundwater History

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

Regional and State History

- ❑ Sept 2014 – Council adopts Reso 28558 supporting Groundwater Management Plan (GMP)
- ❑ Oct 2014 – Sonoma County Water Agency adopts GMP
- ❑ Sept 2014 – Gov. Brown signs SGMA



SGMA Basics

- ❑ Applies primarily to medium/high priority basins
- ❑ Requires local GSA formation by mid-2017
- ❑ Empowers local agencies to prepare/adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans by 2022
- ❑ Provides a buffer against drought/climate change
- ❑ Enhances water supply reliability
- ❑ Sustainable by 2042 – State is the backstop





Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

Step one

Local agencies
form GSAs by
June 30, 2017

Step two

GSAs must adopt
groundwater
sustainability
plans (GSPs) by
2022

Step three

Achieve the
sustainability
goal by 2042



GSA Formation – Who?

- ❑ Any local agency or combination of agencies overlying a basin may form a GSA
- ❑ A local agency must have one of the following authorities:
 - ❑ Water supply
 - ❑ Water management
 - ❑ Land Use
- ❑ County is default in “uncovered areas”

GSA Formation – How?

Form GSA through the use of JPA, MOU or other legal means

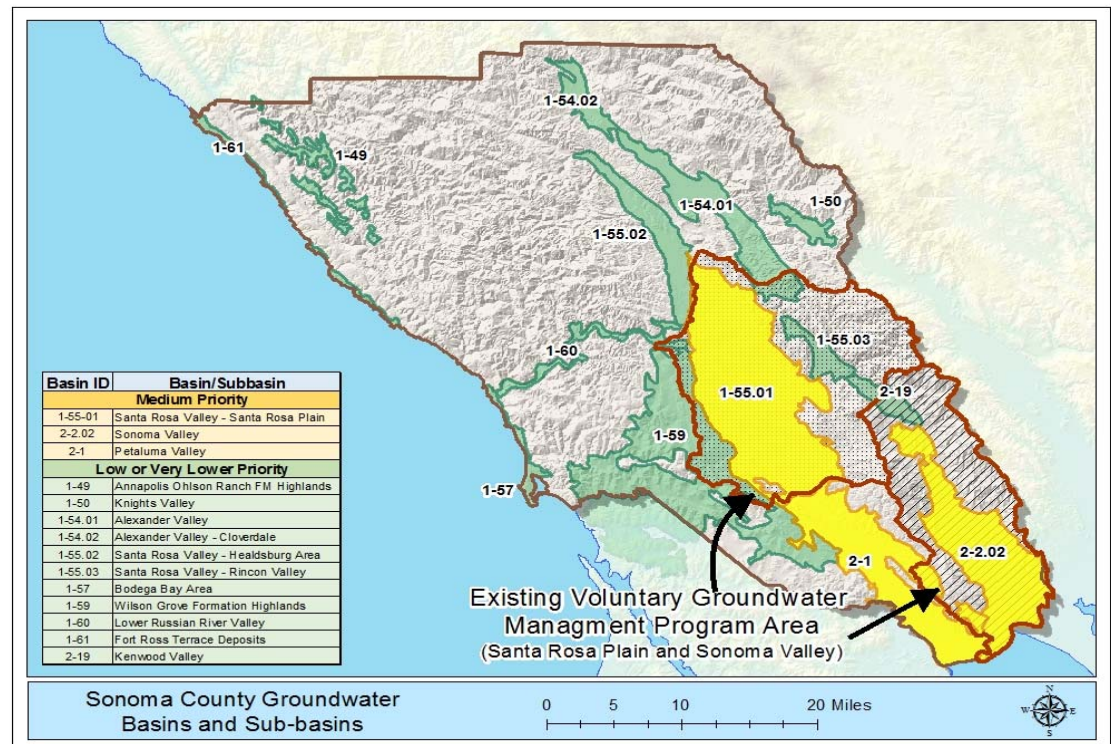
- ❑ One GSA per basin*
- ❑ Multiple GSAs per basin
- ❑ One GSA for multiple basins

*Preferred approach w/ coordination



GSA Formation – Where?

- ❑ Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin
- ❑ Sonoma Valley Subbasin
- ❑ Petaluma Basin





What will the GSAs 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
- ❑ Require groundwater extraction reports
- ❑ Regulate groundwater extractions
- ❑ Implement capital projects to meet goals
- ❑ Assess fees to cover cost of groundwater management



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



Basin Boundaries Adjustments – Technical vs. Jurisdictional



Principles for Developing Governance Options

- ❑ Build upon existing cooperation and successful water management efforts in Sonoma County
- ❑ Reinforces “local management” principles in SGMA
- ❑ Share resources and identify cohesive approach
- ❑ Represent community stakeholders through advisory committees
- ❑ Conduct robust and transparent outreach



Next Steps

- ❑ Outreach and collaboration
- ❑ Consider basin boundary modifications
- ❑ Staffs from local agencies develop framework and legal agreement for GSA
- ❑ Consideration of GSA by BPU and Council in early 2017
- ❑ Form GSA for the Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin by July 1, 2017





Recommended Action

Recommended by Board of Public Utilities and Santa Rosa Water Department staff to Adopt a Resolution of Support for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Principles For Developing Governance Options

Thank You

Questions/Comments?



**Santa Rosa Plain Estimated Groundwater Demands by Use Type
Average for 1975-2010, (USGS, 2014)**

