

## What is a Groundwater Sustainability Agency?

A **Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA)** is a soon-to-be-formed public agency that would manage groundwater in the Salinas Valley Basin.

To meet state law requirements, GSAs must develop a groundwater sustainability plan by 2020 and achieve groundwater sustainability in the Salinas Valley by 2040.

GSAs **MUST** do the following, known as **management responsibilities**:

- Prepare and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan
- Maintain basin groundwater sustainability
- Conduct public hearings regarding sustainability plan adoption or amendment
- Submit annual reports
- Periodic review of sustainability plan
- Maintain list of interested parties

## Who can serve as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency?

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act defines a GSA as a local agency or combination of local agencies.

A local agency is any public agency that does one of the following:

- Supplies water
- Manages water
- Controls land use

In the Salinas Valley groundwater basin, this could include Monterey County and San Luis Obispo County, the cities, water districts, and other local public agencies that meet those criteria. Mutual and private water companies *may* also participate in a GSA.

## What can the agency do?

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies **CAN** do the following activities, known as **discretionary** authorities:

- Adopt rules, regulations, & ordinances
- Conduct investigations of water rights
- Require well registration / well permitting
- Require well operators to measure & report extractions
- Require reporting of diversions of surface water to storage
- Acquire property and water rights
- Reclaim water
- Impose well spacing requirements
- Regulate groundwater extractions, including limiting or prohibiting groundwater production
- Impose fees and assessments
- Undertake enforcement actions for noncompliance
- Implement capital projects

## Who will decide in the Salinas Valley?

Elected officials from the county, the cities, the water districts, and other eligible public agencies will make the final decision on forming the GSA by June 31, 2017. These agencies will consider adopting the recommendations that staff and stakeholders are developing. The county, the cities, and other stakeholders representing affordable housing, agriculture, the environment, land use, rural residential well owners, and water suppliers are collaborating and consulting with the public to make recommendations on who would serve as the GSA.

According to state law, if no local entities come together to form the GSA, the county would be the default GSA. If the county doesn't step forward, the State Water Resources Control Board would intervene.



# Providing Input on Groundwater Sustainability Agency Formation

## Groundwater Stakeholder Forums

Four Groundwater Stakeholder Forums will shape the overall process for forming a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA). All the major decisions on forming the agency will be vetted at the Forum. Everyone who is interested in groundwater management should plan to attend these meetings, which will take place in Salinas and have simultaneous Spanish translation.

## Stakeholder Forum Dates

#1 – **May 19, 2016**, 5:30-7:30  
 #2 – **September 8, 2016**, 5:30-7:30  
 #3 – **November 14, 5:30-7:30**  
 #4 – **Jan 26, 2017** (tentative), 5:30-7:30  
 @ Sherwood Hall, 940 N. Main St., Salinas

## Schedule a Briefing for your Organization

Collaborative Work Group members are available to meet with your organization to share information and to solicit input for forming the groundwater sustainability agency. To schedule a briefing, see contacts below.

## Visit [SalinasGroundwater.org](http://SalinasGroundwater.org)

## Join Interested Parties List

[Sign up](http://SalinasGroundwater.org) on the web at SalinasGroundwater.org to receive regular updates via email.

## For More Information Contact

Monterey County, Nick Chiulos:  
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City of Salinas Gary Petersen: garyp@ci.salinas.ca.us

Facilitator Gina Bartlett: gina@cbuilding.org

## State Deadlines & Info

June 30, 2017: Form Groundwater Sustainability Agency

2020: Prepare Groundwater Sustainability Plans

2040: Achieve Groundwater Sustainability

**Learn more at [Groundwater.Ca.Gov](http://Groundwater.Ca.Gov)**