

# Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

Public Workshop For Proposed  
Designation Of Tulare Lake  
Subbasin as a Probationary Basin  
November 8<sup>rd</sup>, 2023



State Water Resources Control Board

# Participation Poll



bitly



# Spanish Language Access

## For Spanish Interpretation Service Users

- Please see registration table for an interpretation device
- Click channel number **X** on your device to access services

## For all Participants

- We may have slower than usual transitions between slides, we appreciate your patience

# How to Participate



## **Written Comments**

Submit Questions and Comments by comment card to State Water Board Staff to be read out loud.

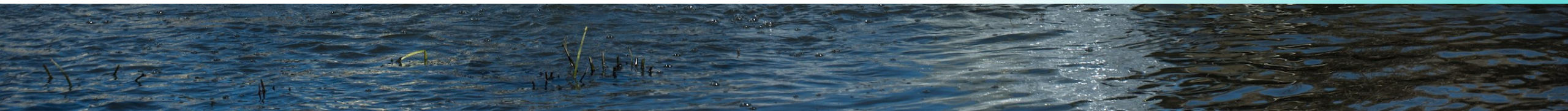


## **Verbal Comments**

Submit comment card to hold your place in line to present your comment.

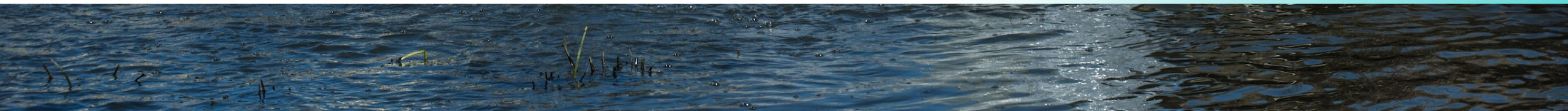


# Objectives

- 1. Provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the draft staff report which describes the actions staff recommend the State Water Resources Control Board should take for the proposed designation of Tulare Lake Subbasin as a probationary basin.**
  - 2. Provide an opportunity for the public to interact with State Water Resources Control Board staff and raise their questions and concerns.**
  - 3. Provide an opportunity for the public to provide verbal and written comments on the draft recommendations.**
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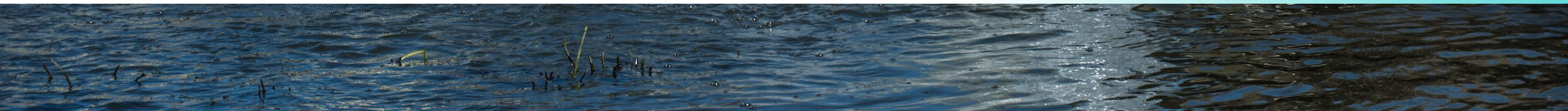


# Community Guidelines

1. **Engage respectfully and avoid personal attacks – verbally or in written comments**
  2. **Use comment cards or microphone to communicate comments and/or questions to speakers**
  3. **Public Feedback**
    - **Question & Answer Portion**
      - **We will keep the time brief to prioritize the comment period**
    - **Public Comment Portion**
      - **We will go in order of the queue**
      - **Keep comments within the provided time allotment shown on the timer**
- 




# Public Workshop Agenda

1. Opening Remarks
  2. Groundwater & Tulare Lake Subbasin Background
  3. Overview of State Intervention Under SGMA
  4. Plan Issues Described in Staff Report
  5. Proposed Requirements for Groundwater Extractors
  6. Public Q&A on Probationary Hearing Process
  7. Public Comment
- 

A scenic view of a lake at sunset. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, casting a warm glow. In the foreground, there are tall reeds and a circular structure partially submerged in the water. The background shows a distant city and mountains. A dark blue semi-transparent rectangle is overlaid on the left side of the image, containing the text "Opening Remarks" in white.

# Opening Remarks

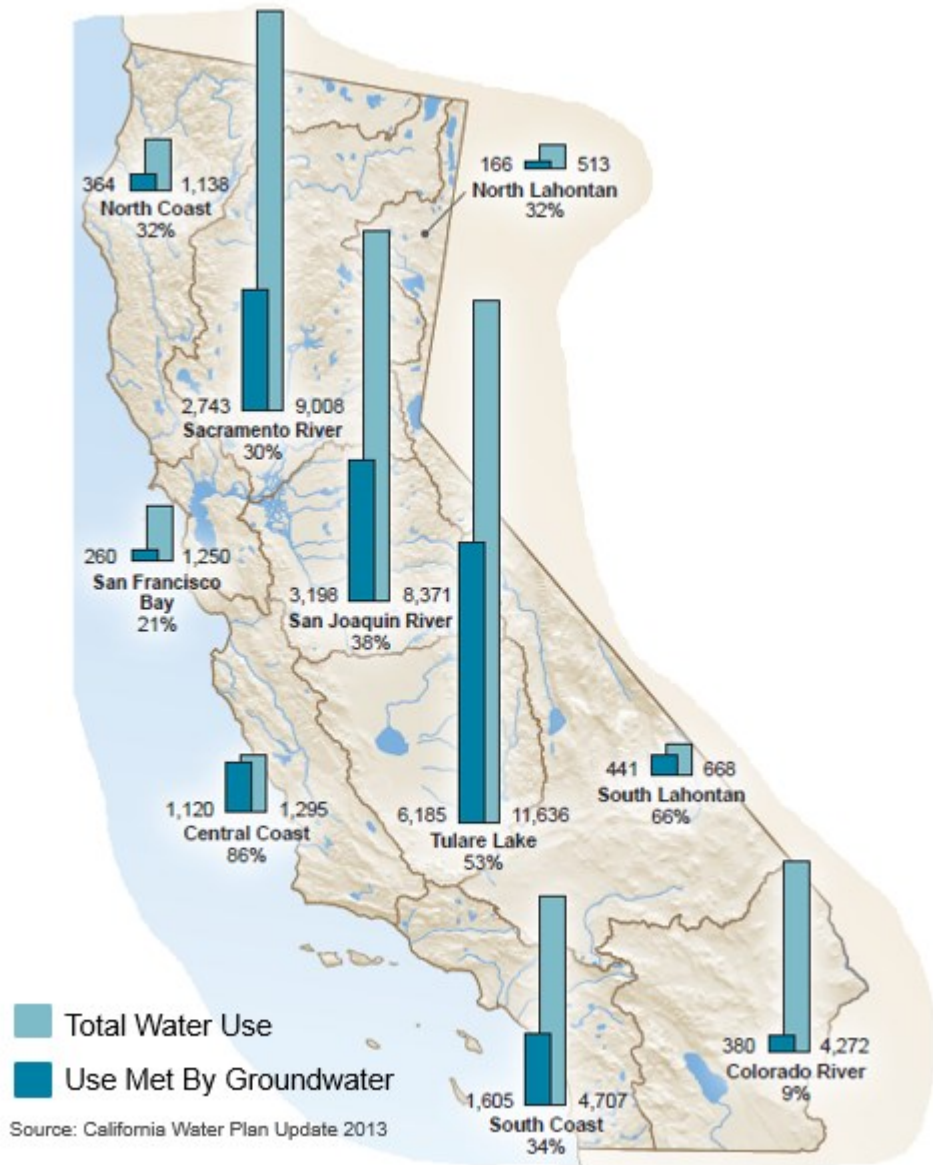




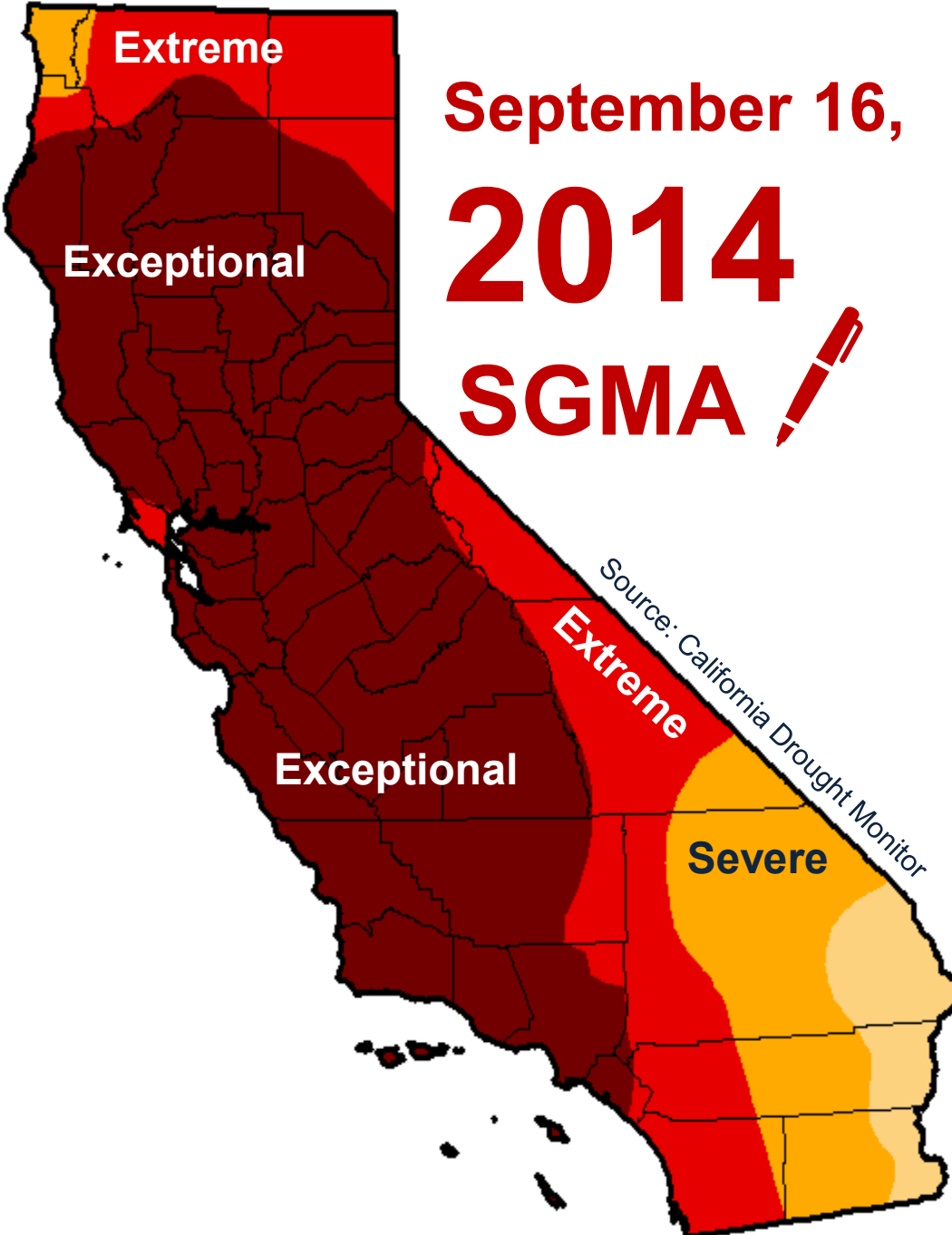
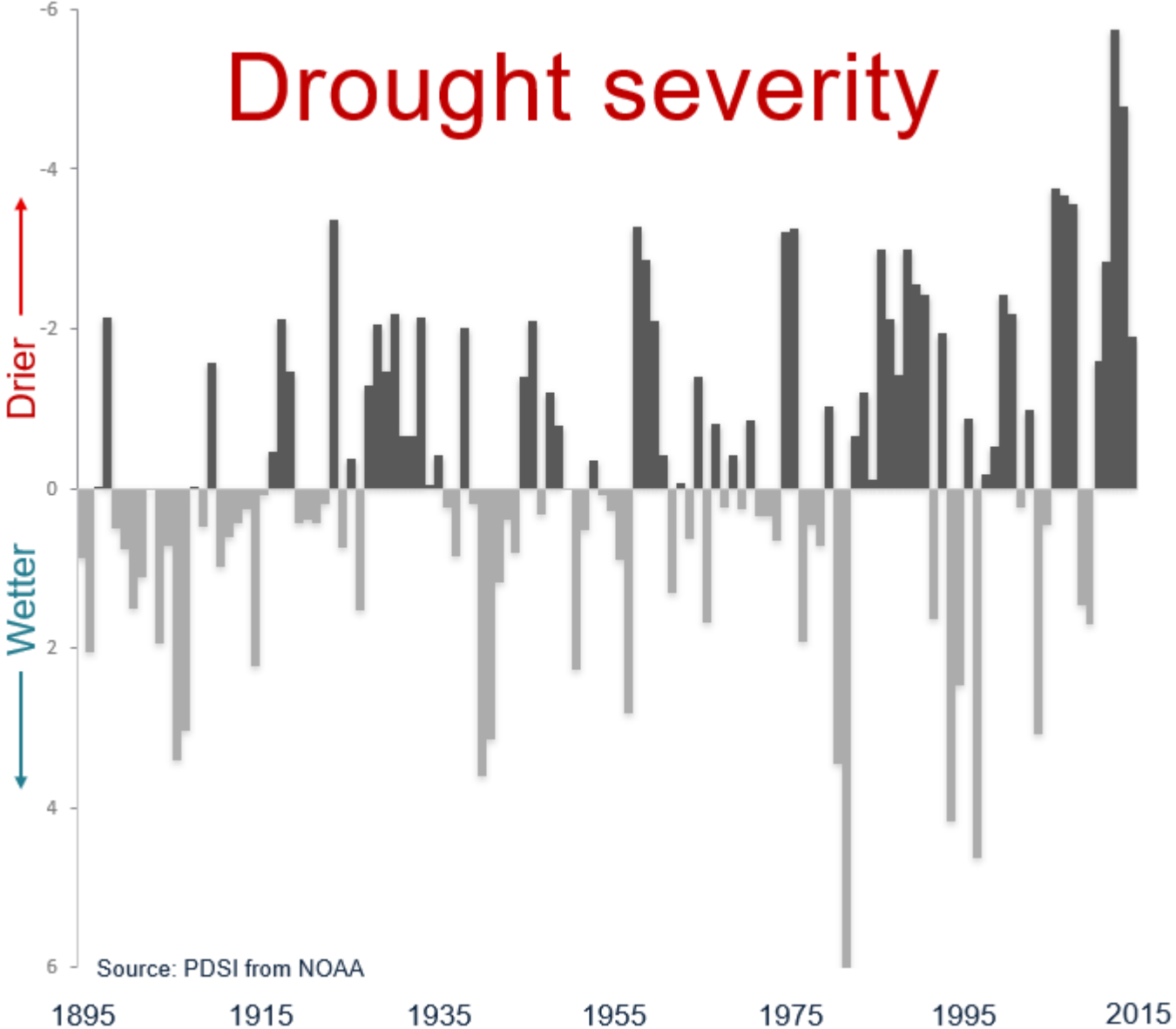
# Groundwater & Tulare Lake Subbasin Background

# 80%

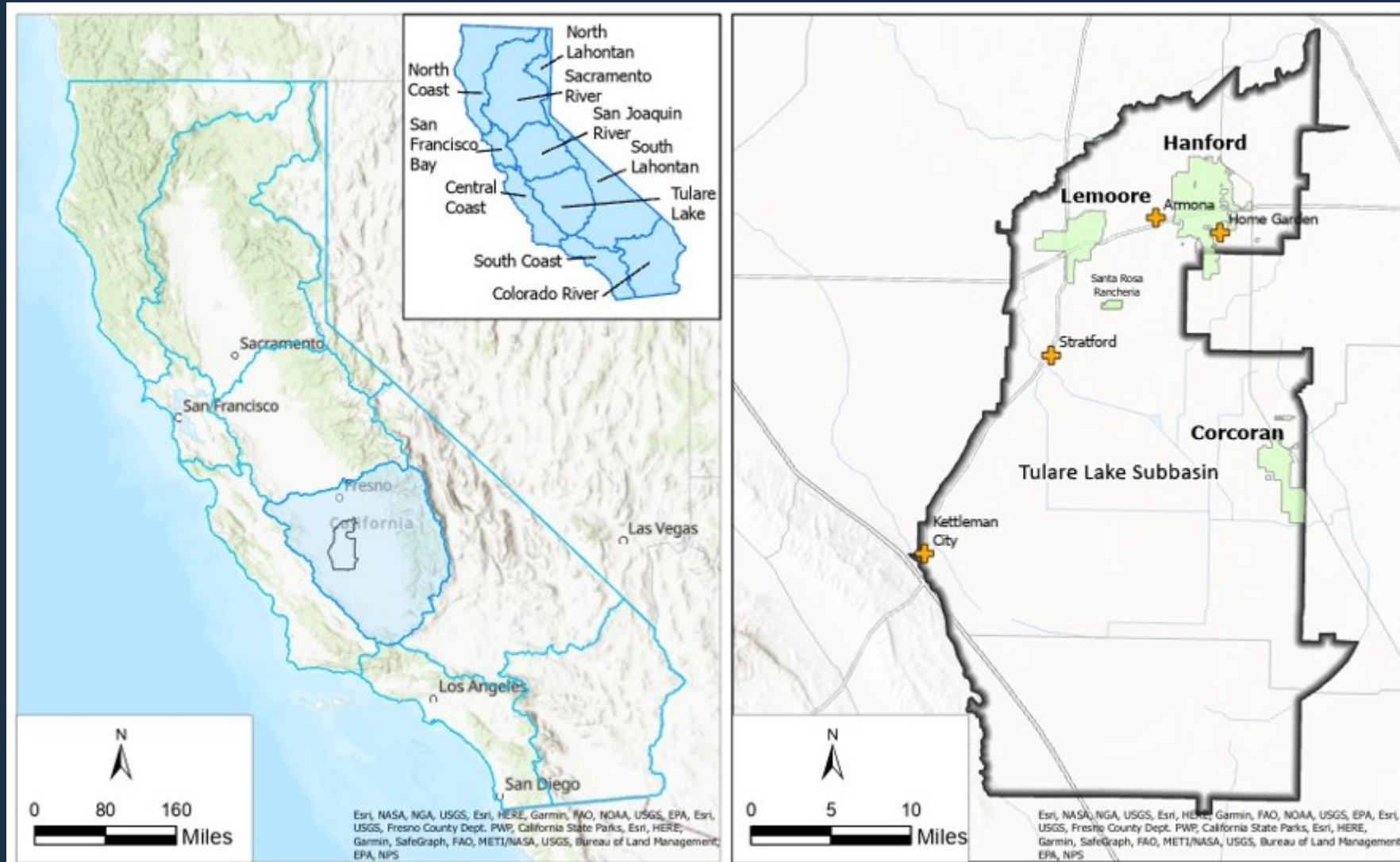
of Californians rely on  
**GROUNDWATER**  
for part of their water  
supply



# Drought severity



# Tulare Lake Subbasin



# Tulare Lake Subbasin

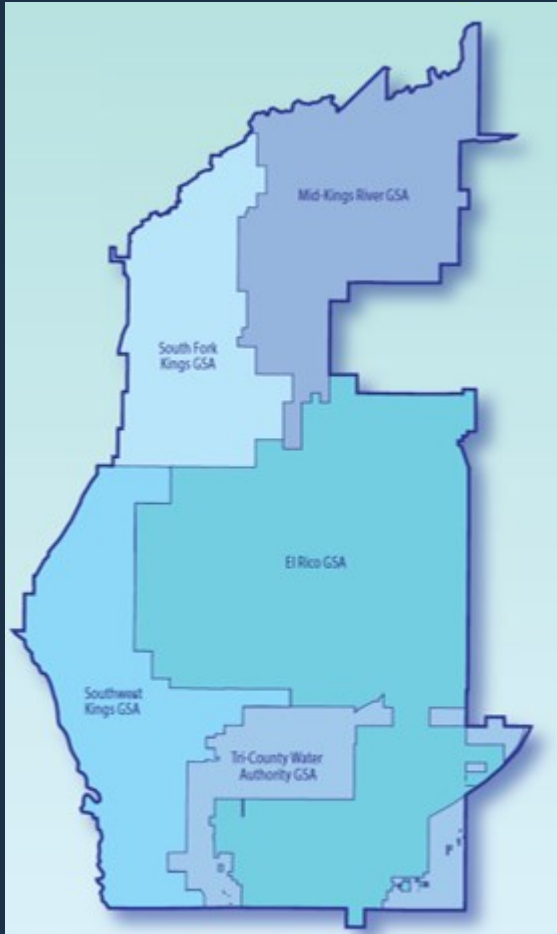


Image source: 2022 Tulare Lake Subbasin Amended GSP

## Five Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)

- Mid-Kings River GSA
- South Fork Kings GSA
- Southwest Kings GSA
- El Rico GSA
- Tri-County Water Authority GSA

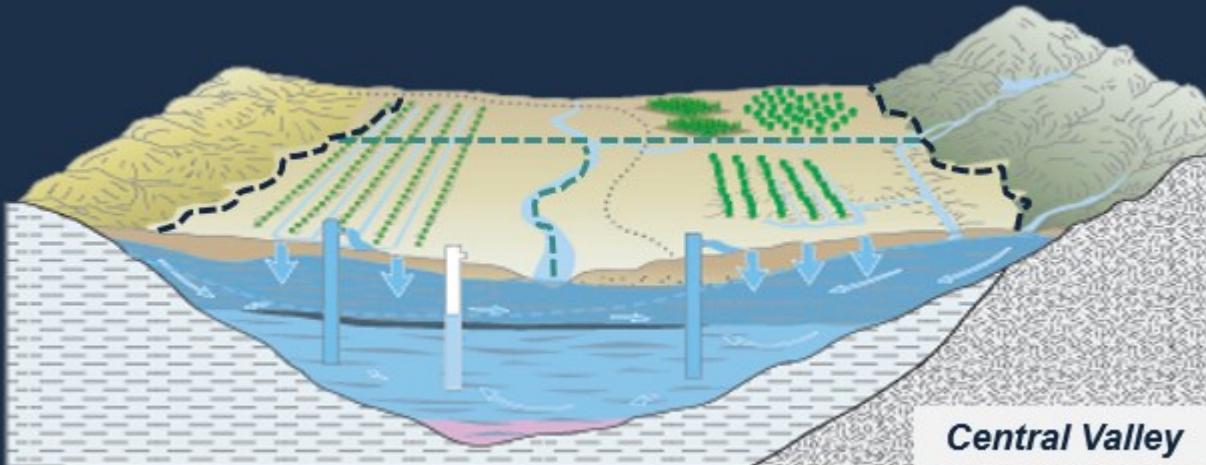
## One Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP)

- Tulare Lake Subbasin Amended Groundwater Sustainability Plan (2022)

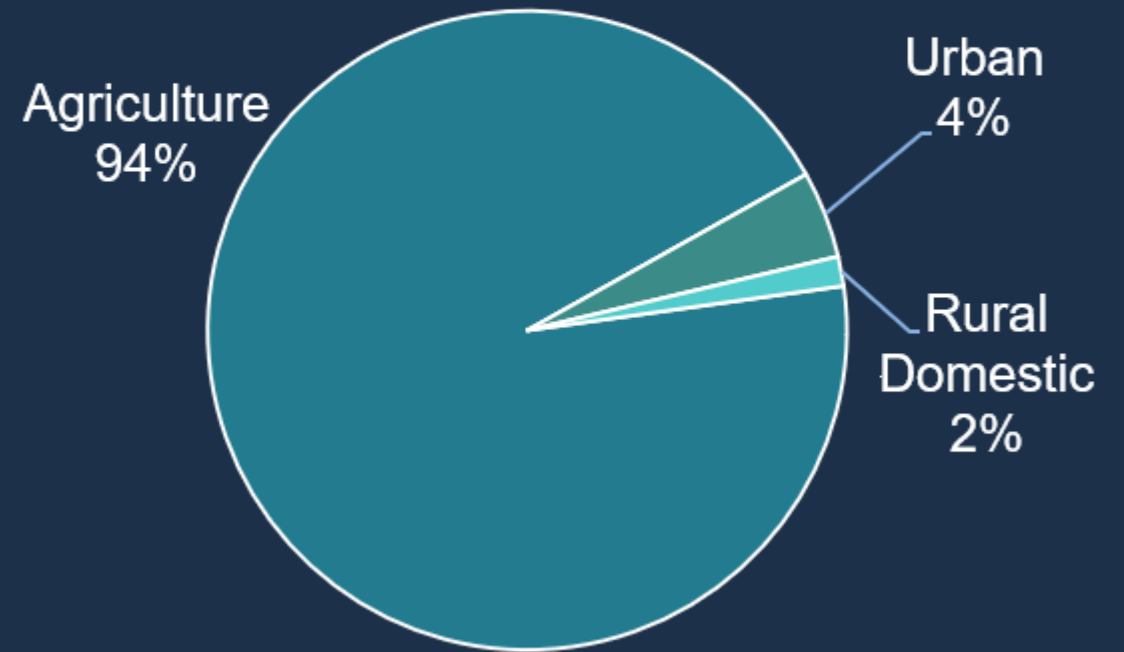
# Tulare Lake Subbasin

## Beneficial Uses of Groundwater

- Drinking Water
- Agriculture
- Environment



## Groundwater Extractions October 2021 - September 2022



Data Source: WY 2022 Tulare Lake Subbasin Annual Report

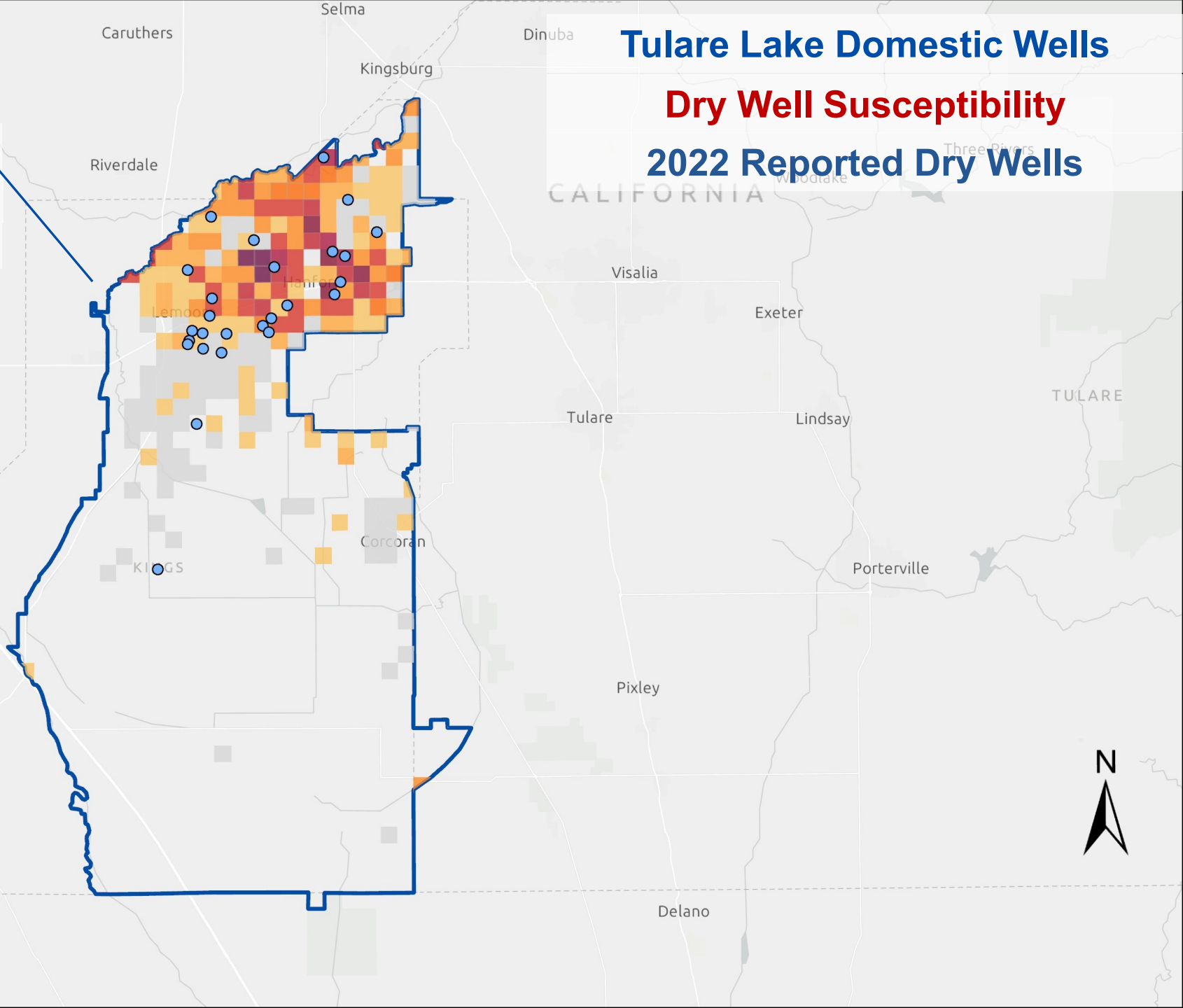
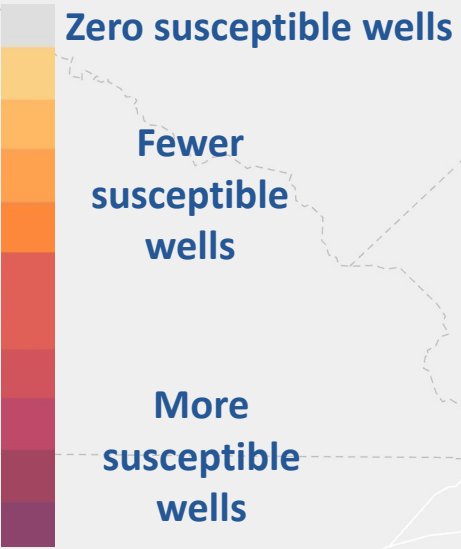
# Tulare Lake Domestic Wells

## Dry Well Susceptibility

### 2022 Reported Dry Wells

**Tulare Lake**  
**Susceptible: 698**  
**Reported: 27**

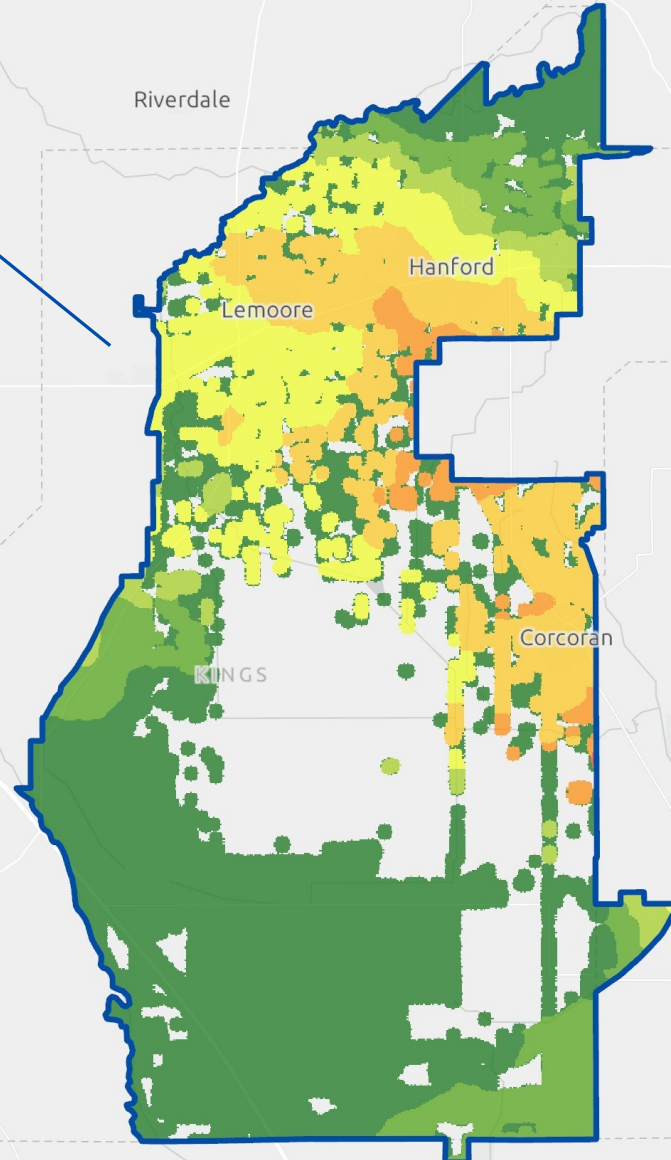
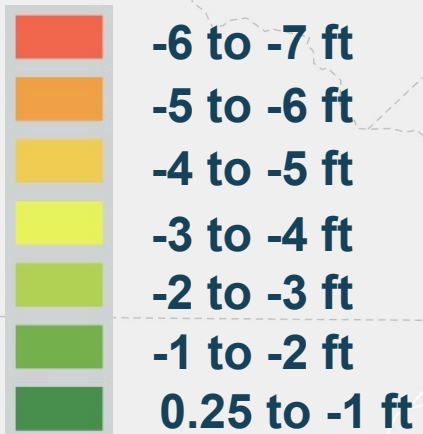
**Density of domestic wells  
susceptible to going dry**



# RECENT SUBSIDENCE

Tulare Lake  
Average -1.8 ft

**Subsidence from InSAR**  
**Jun 2015 to Jan 2023**

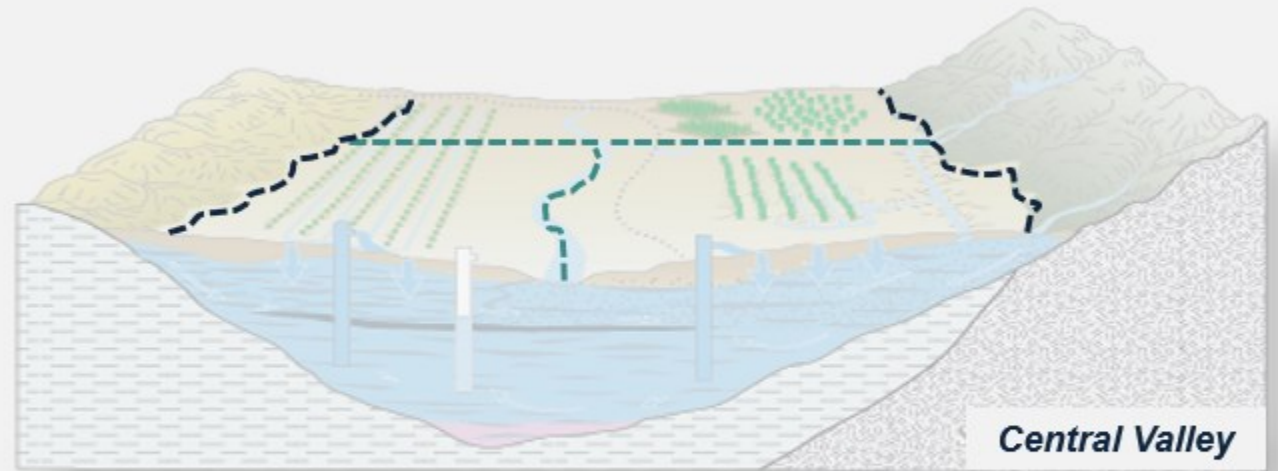
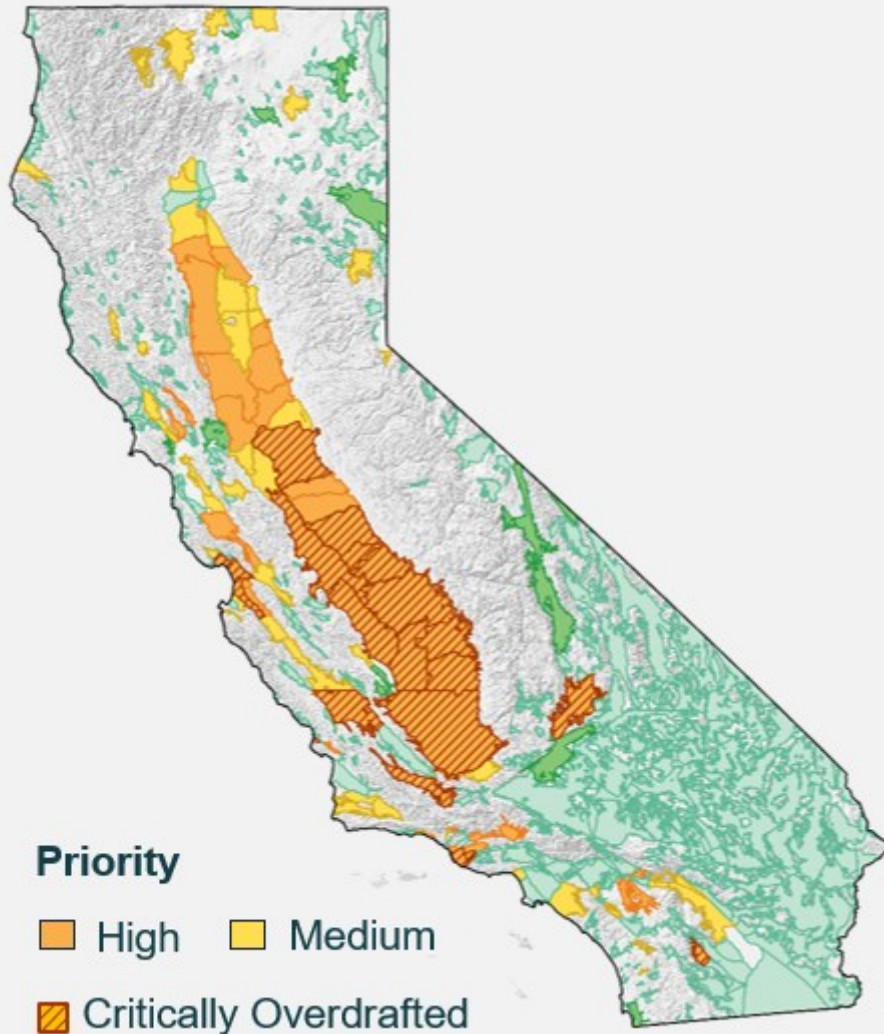






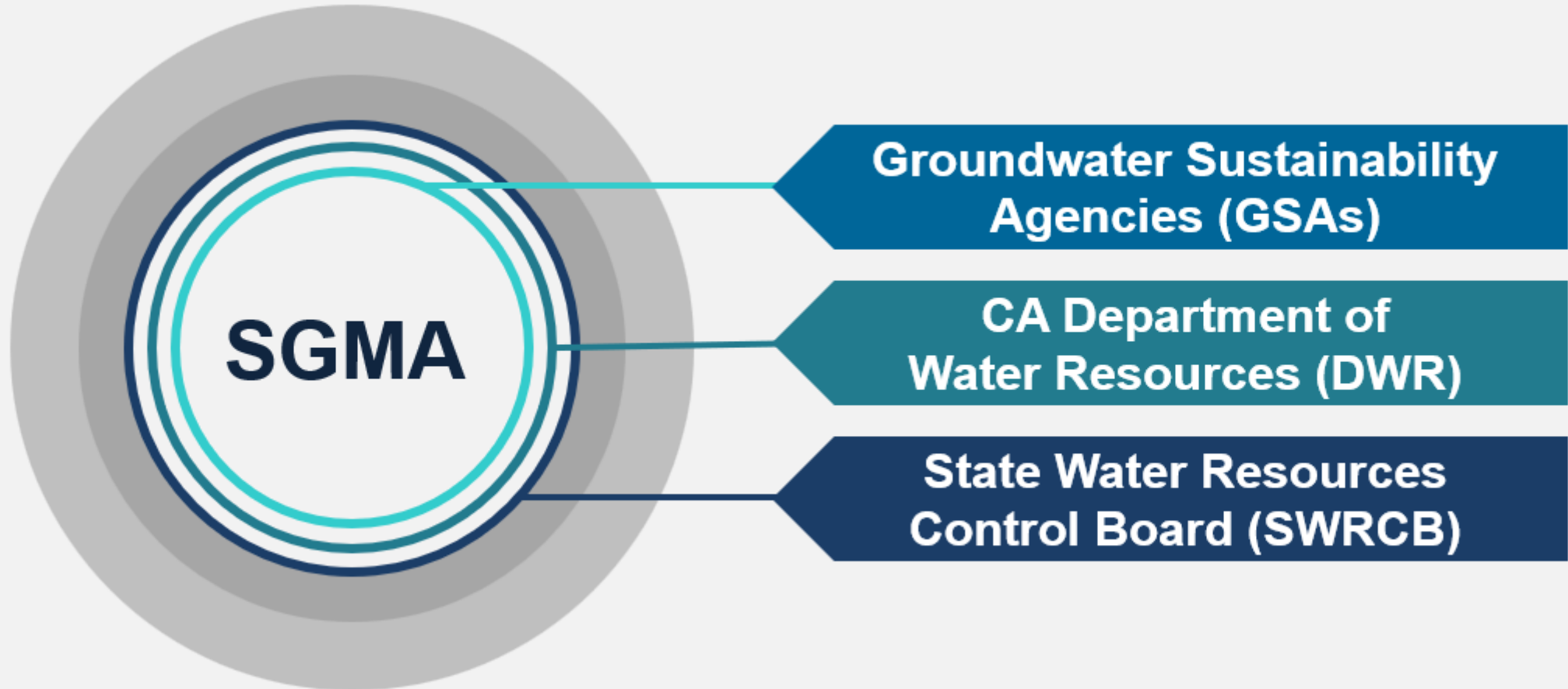
# State Intervention Under SGMA

# SGMA AT THE BASIN SCALE



## Basins & Subbasins

# SGMA AUTHORITIES



# What is Sustainability?

**Basin operated within its sustainable yield and not experiencing undesirable results:**



Lowering  
GW Levels



Storage  
Reduction



Seawater  
Intrusion



Degraded  
Quality



Land  
Subsidence



Surface  
Depletion

**Significant and unreasonable...**

**...caused by groundwater conditions occurring throughout the basin.**

“

Where a local groundwater sustainability agency is not managing its groundwater sustainably,

**the state needs to protect the resource**

until... a local groundwater sustainability agency can sustainably manage the groundwater basin.

”

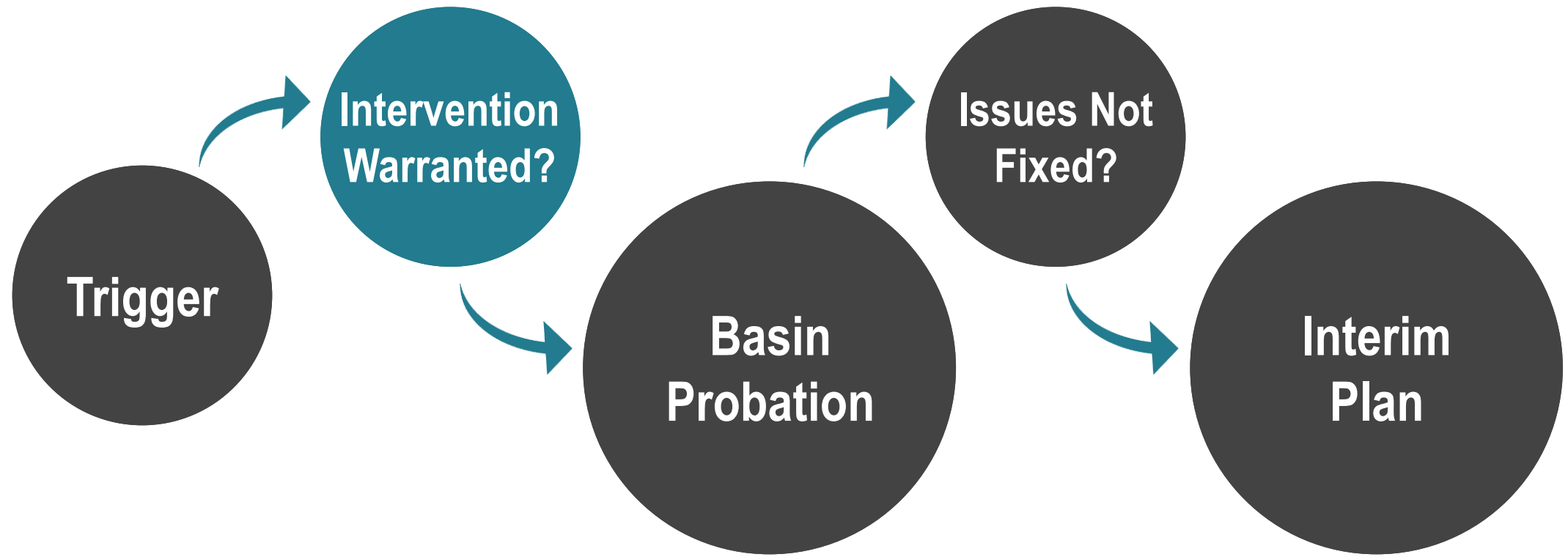
California Legislature

# Board Backstop Basics

- 1 Board only steps in when local efforts fail.
- 2 Temporarily protects the basin until locals come up-to-speed.
- 3 Backstop is triggered by deadlines and deficiencies.



# State Water Resources Control Board Intervention



# Probationary groundwater BASIN



Board identifies deficiencies



GSAs have time to address issues  
& continue to implement their plans



Extractors begin reporting



Board may require meters



Board recovers costs via fees





# Extraction **REPORTS**

**Reports are submitted annually.**

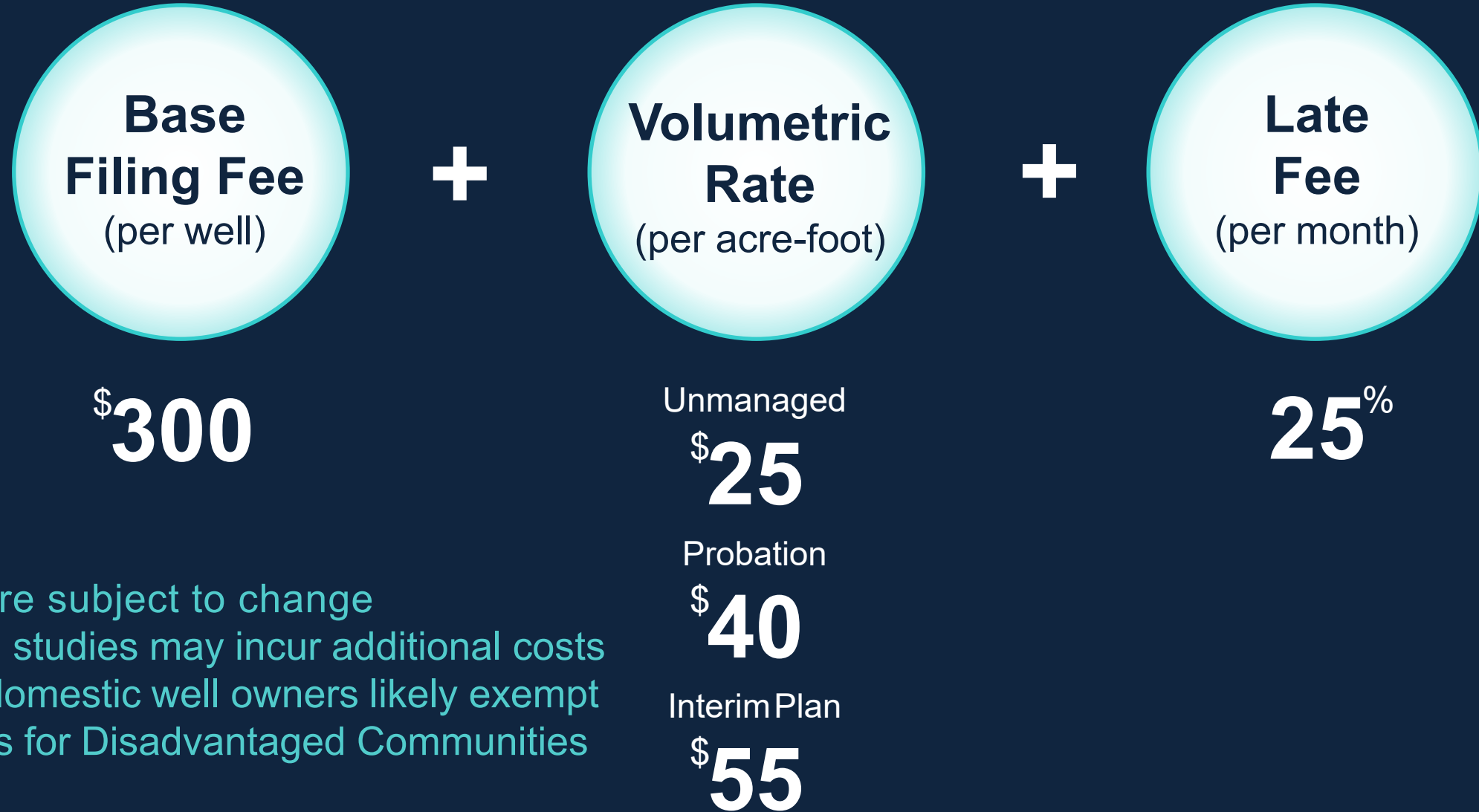
Reports require...

- well location & capacity
- monthly extraction volumes
- place & purpose of use

**Reports must be filed electronically.**

Information on extraction reports is available at [https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma/reporting\\_and\\_fees.html](https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma/reporting_and_fees.html)

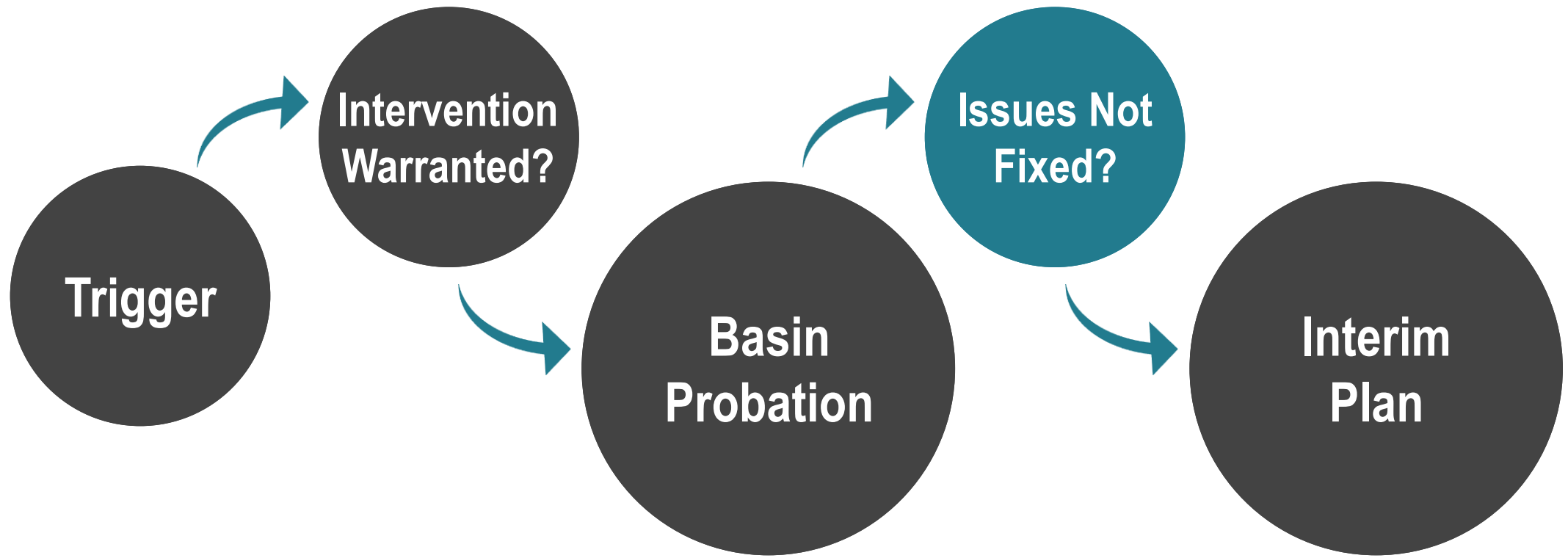
# FEES: Pumpers who must report



## Notes:

Fees are subject to change  
Special studies may incur additional costs  
Small domestic well owners likely exempt  
Waivers for Disadvantaged Communities (DAC)

# State Water Resources Control Board Intervention

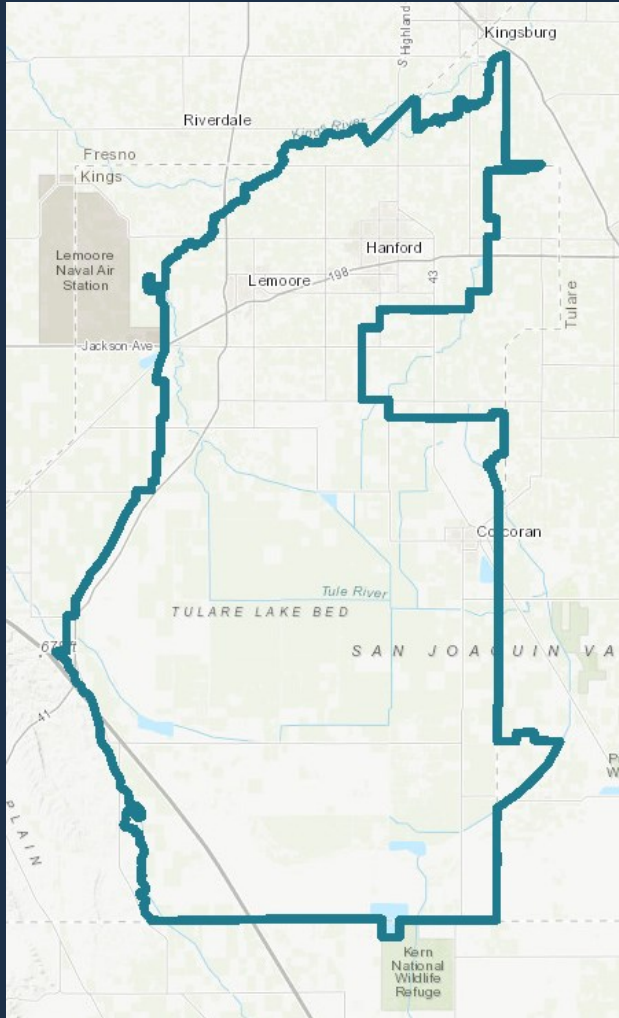




# Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Issues Described in Draft Staff Report



# Staff Recommendation



**Designate the basin probationary**

***The plan will allow substantial impacts to people who rely on domestic wells and critical infrastructure such as canals, levees, and the aquifer itself.***

***An improved plan is necessary to achieve sustainability in the basin by 2040.***

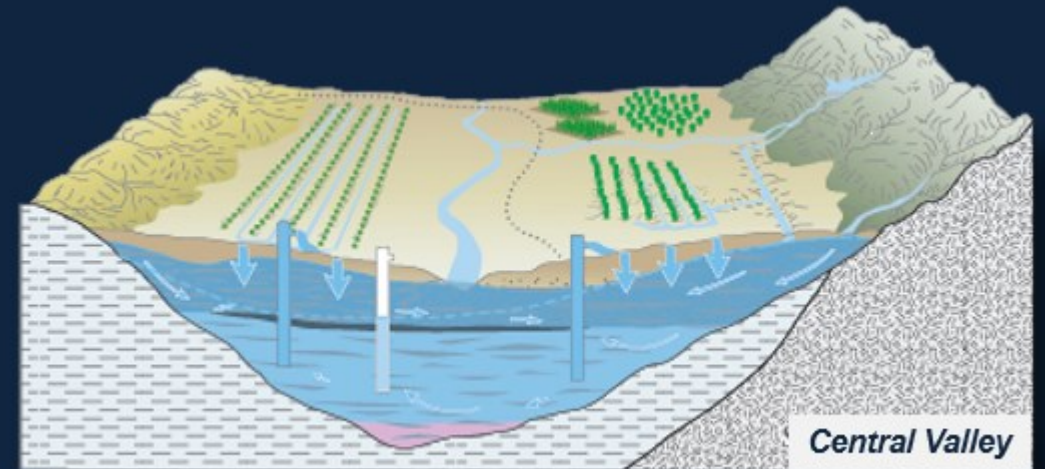
# GSP Elements

Groundwater Conditions

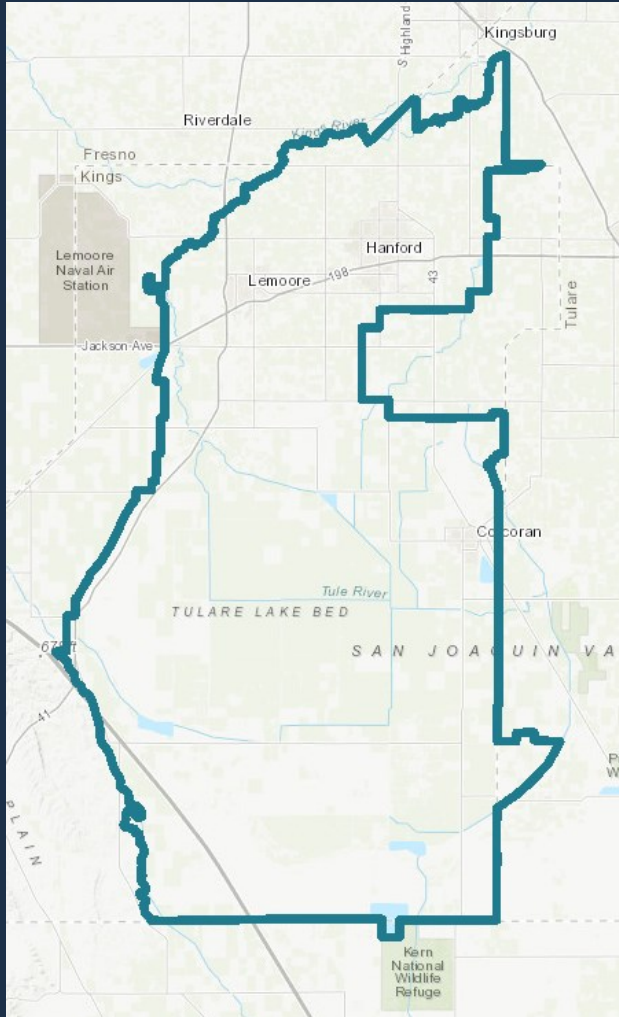
Sustainability Criteria

Monitoring

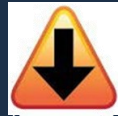
Projects & Actions



# Plan Deficiencies



Issues with:



Declining water levels



Land subsidence



Water quality degradation

**Due to continued groundwater overdraft caused by pumping**



# Plan Deficiencies – Groundwater Levels

## Problems with:

- **Description of what the GSAs are trying to avoid (“undesirable result”)**
  - **Example: how many wells go dry, how low water levels in the aquifers can go**
- **Effects on shallow wells (A-zone)**
- **Specifics about water level thresholds for the deeper aquifers (B-zone, C-zone)**
- **Role and scope of well impact mitigation**
- **Plan for halting declining groundwater levels**
- **Effects on subsidence, water quality**

# Potential Actions – Groundwater Levels

- Describe the “undesirable result” in sufficient detail
- Gather adequate information about pumping and groundwater levels
- Commit to accessible, comprehensive, and appropriately funded well impact mitigation programs
- Plan ahead for drought conditions and commit to reducing pumping
- Describe the relationship between minimum thresholds (the lowest acceptable level) for each sustainability indicator

# Plan Deficiencies – Land Subsidence

## Problems with:

- **Description of what the GSAs are trying to avoid**
  - **Example: amount of damage to canals, levees, or wells, loss of storage in aquifers**
- **How management criteria relate to avoiding effects on land use or infrastructure**
- **Impacts on flood protection infrastructure**
- **Plan for halting land subsidence**

# Potential Actions – Land Subsidence

- Describe the “undesirable result” in sufficient detail
- Develop quantitative criteria that avoid undesirable results
- Consult with flood management agencies and expand the analysis of land subsidence impacts on flood infrastructure
- Plan ahead to avoid significant and unreasonable land subsidence

# Plan Deficiencies – Degraded Groundwater Quality

## Problems with:

- **Description of what the GSAs are trying to avoid**
  - **Example: how much worse water quality gets near drinking water wells**
- **Frequency and location of water quality monitoring**
- **Allowing degradation of already poor water quality**
- **Potential delays in addressing water quality degradation**

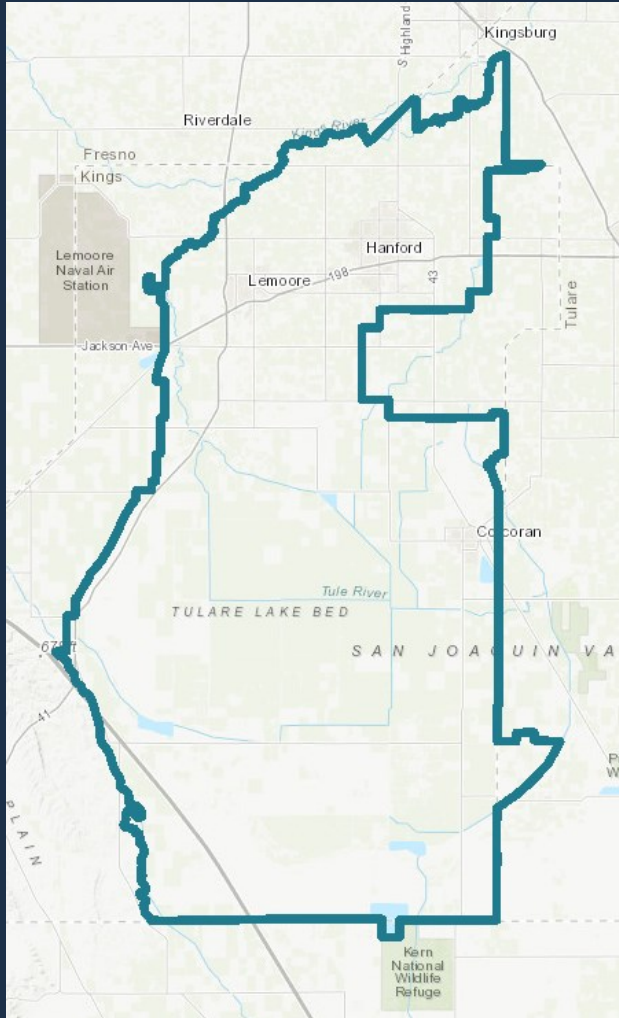
# Potential Actions – Degraded Groundwater Quality

- Describe the “undesirable result” in sufficient detail
- Revise management criteria to be consistent with SGMA
- Update the water quality monitoring plan
- Plan additional sampling when water quality is degraded
- Commit to accessible, comprehensive, and appropriately funded well impact mitigation programs



# Recommended Requirements For Groundwater Extractors

# Staff Recommendations



- Exclude household domestic well users from reporting and fees
- Require other pumpers to report by December of each year
- Require meters for those pumping more than 500 acre-feet a year
- Do not exclude any portion of the basin from probationary status



# Tulare Lake Schedule

**2023-2024**

**Oct. 12, 2023**



**Release draft  
staff report**  

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**Notice to cities  
counties**

**Oct. 13, 2023**



**Notice to all  
known  
pumpers**

**Oct. 12 –  
Dec. 11, 2023**



**Public  
comment  
period**

**Nov. 3 & 8,  
2023**



**Stakeholder  
meetings**

**March 2024**



**Release final  
staff report**  

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**Issue draft  
resolution**

**Apr. 16, 2024**



**Hearing**  

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**Potential  
probationary  
designation**

# Public Q & A

A scenic view of a lake at sunset. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright reflection on the water. In the foreground, there are several clumps of tall, green reeds. In the middle ground, a circular structure, possibly a well or a small island, is partially submerged in the water, with water splashing around it. The background shows a distant city skyline and mountains under a sky with scattered clouds.

# Public Comment



# Tulare Lake Schedule

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**Hearing**  

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**Potential  
probationary  
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# Written Comments

## Electronic:

Email in PDF format to [SGMA-TulareLake@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:SGMA-TulareLake@waterboards.ca.gov)

Fax to (916) 341-5620

## Mail or Hand Delivery:

Address to:

Courtney Tyler, Clerk to the Board  
State Water Resources Control Board

Mail: P.O. Box 100, Sacramento, CA  
95812

Hand Delivery: 1001 I Street, 24th  
Floor, Sacramento, CA 95814

Comments must be received by **December 11, 2023, at 12:00 noon.**

# Thank you and Adjourn

[bit.ly/swb\\_sgma\\_tulare\\_lake](http://bit.ly/swb_sgma_tulare_lake)

