



WHAT IS HAPPENING WITH GROUNDWATER IN CALIFORNIA?

Groundwater is water found beneath the earth's surface. Because groundwater is not easily visible, it is often taken for granted. Groundwater basins in California are in a state of overdraft. On average, water is pumped out of many basins faster than it is replenished by rain and other sources. This puts drinking water and irrigation sources in jeopardy. The state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), adopted by the legislature in 2014, requires local agencies to develop and carry out sustainability plans so that communities can continue to rely on groundwater for drinking water, agriculture, habitat, and other needs.

What is happening with groundwater in the Chowchilla basin?

The Chowchilla groundwater basin is critically overdrafted. This threatens groundwater levels and drinking water quality. It can cause streams and rivers to go dry and cause the land surface to sink, potentially damaging infrastructure. Local groundwater sustainability agencies (GSAs) are charged with managing groundwater responsibly under SGMA.

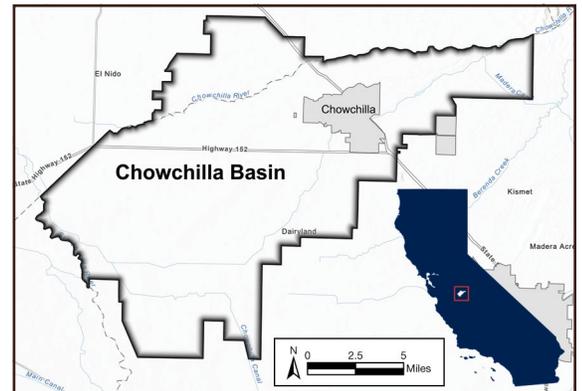
In March 2023, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) determined that the local plan to manage groundwater was inadequate, meaning it did not do enough to protect groundwater for the future. After making that determination, DWR referred the basin to the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board) for further review under SGMA's "state intervention" provisions. When a groundwater basin is referred to the State Water Board, the Board can consider placing the basin on probation.

In March 2025, Chowchilla GSAs adopted a revised plan. Board staff evaluated this plan and concluded it improves groundwater management significantly. Due to these improvements, Board staff does not recommend placing the Chowchilla basin on probation and recommends returning the basin to DWR for ongoing oversight while the local agencies continue managing groundwater.

You have a voice in deciding the future of groundwater in the Chowchilla basin.

As someone who relies on groundwater in the Chowchilla basin, you have a voice in the Board's decision-making process.

Chowchilla Basin



How you can participate:

- **In writing:** Provide a comment on the Staff Assessment by May 23, 2025.
- **Attend the State Water Board Meeting on June 3, 2025, at 9 am:**
 - **In Person:** CalEPA HQ
1001 I Street, Sacramento, CA 95814
 - **Watch Online:** video.calepa.ca.gov
 - **On Zoom:** Sign up to provide a verbal comment on Zoom.
- The meeting date is subject to change. **Join the SGMA Groundwater Management email list** to receive updates.
- More information on how to provide a comment or participate in the meeting is available at: bit.ly/sgma-chowchilla
- **Stay informed!** Visit our website to subscribe to the Board's SGMA Groundwater Management email list and learn more: www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma