



DO YOU KNOW WHAT'S 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. As a result, groundwater basins in California are in a state of overdraft: on average, water is being pumped out of many basins faster than it is replenished by rain and other sources. This puts important drinking water and irrigation sources in jeopardy. The state's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), adopted by the Legislature in 2014, requires local agencies managing groundwater basins to develop and carry out sustainability plans so this water can be a resource communities can depend on for the future for drinking water, agriculture, habitat, and other needs.

Do you know what is happening with groundwater in the Kern County basin?

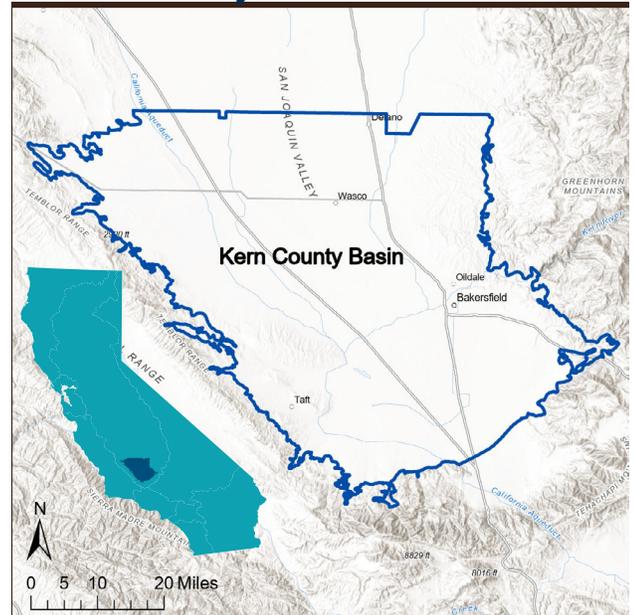
The Kern County groundwater basin is critically overdrafted. This threatens groundwater levels and drinking water quality. It also causes the land surface to sink, potentially damaging infrastructure, and can cause streams and rivers to go dry. Local agencies are charged with managing groundwater resources responsibly. In March 2023, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) determined that the plans that local agencies in the basin wrote to manage groundwater are inadequate, meaning the plans do not do enough to protect groundwater resources for the future. After making that determination, as required by law, DWR referred the basin to the State Water Resources Control Board (Board) for further review.

Now, through a public process, the Board will decide in February 2025 whether to place the Kern County basin on probation. If this happens, some groundwater pumpers will need to report how much water they use and pay fees to the Board until the state determines local agencies have a plan in place that protects groundwater in the basin.

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

As someone who relies on groundwater in the Kern County basin, you have a voice in the Board's decision-making process. Sharing your comments can help shape the recommendations that staff will provide to the Board and help it decide if the Kern County basin needs to be put on probation and, if so, what improvements to the basin's plan should happen to better manage groundwater in your area.

Kern County basin



How YOU can participate:

- ▶ **In writing:** You can provide a comment on the Draft Staff Report.
- ▶ **Online:** Join the virtual public workshop on Zoom:
August 26, 2024
11:00 am – 1:30 pm
- ▶ **In person:** Join the public workshop in Bakersfield, CA:
August 29, 2024
5:30 pm – 8:30 pm
- ▶ **Attend the hearing:** February 20, 2025
- ▶ **For more details on how to participate, please review the attached notice.**
- ▶ **Stay informed!** Visit our website to subscribe to the Board's Groundwater Management email list and learn more:
www.waterboards.ca.gov/sgma