



Groundwater is a vital resource, together let's protect it.

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Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency Press Release

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Local Groundwater Sustainability Plan Approved by State

Santa Cruz County, CA – On June 3, 2021, the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) announced its [approval of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan \(Plan\) for the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Basin \(Basin\)](#). The Plan was submitted to DWR in January 2020 by [the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency \(MGA\)](#).

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was enacted 2014 to ensure groundwater sustainability by setting goals and measuring key metrics in groundwater basins throughout California. The MGA, formed in 2016, is responsible for the management of the Basin. The Basin is one of only 21 basins in the state designated as a high priority basin in a state of critical overdraft since the groundwater aquifers are threatened by seawater intrusion.

The Plan is one of the first two sustainability plans in the state to be approved under SGMA. With this approval, the roadmap is set towards Basin groundwater sustainability, but the work continues. As described in the Plan, the MGA and its member agencies are implementing projects and management actions to improve conditions in the Basin and utilizing an extensive monitoring network to track conditions in the Basin. In 2025, the MGA will submit its first 5-year assessment of Plan implementation to DWR. The ongoing monitoring and assessments are intended to ensure water supply reliability and water quality for current and future uses and to prevent adverse environmental impacts to this precious local resource.

From 2016 to 2020, the MGA worked on the development of the Plan, utilizing the expertise of local water managers, consultants, a community advisory committee, groundwater modeling, and, in 2017, the use of state-of-the-art technology to map the seawater/freshwater interface to inform the future management of the Basin. The Plan is a comprehensive technical document that meets the detailed requirements of SGMA by identifying measurable criteria by which the condition of the Basin will be evaluated over time and the potential actions to avoid undesirable results and mitigate overdraft within 20 years.

About the Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency

The MGA has an 11-member Board of Directors comprised of two representatives appointed by each of its member agencies (Central Water District, City of Santa Cruz, County of Santa Cruz, and Soquel Creek Water District), and three private well owner representatives.