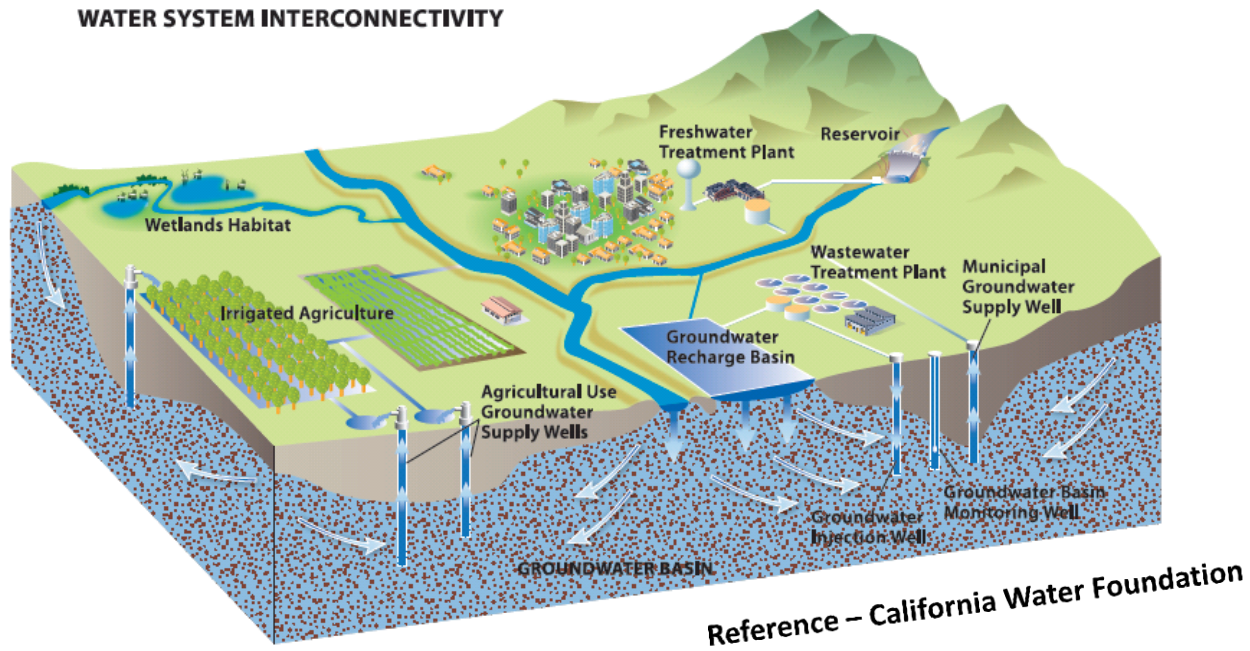


Sustainable Groundwater Management Act in Sonoma County



Western States Water Council Meeting
By Jay Jasperse, Sonoma County Water Agency
June 27, 2017

Presentation Overview

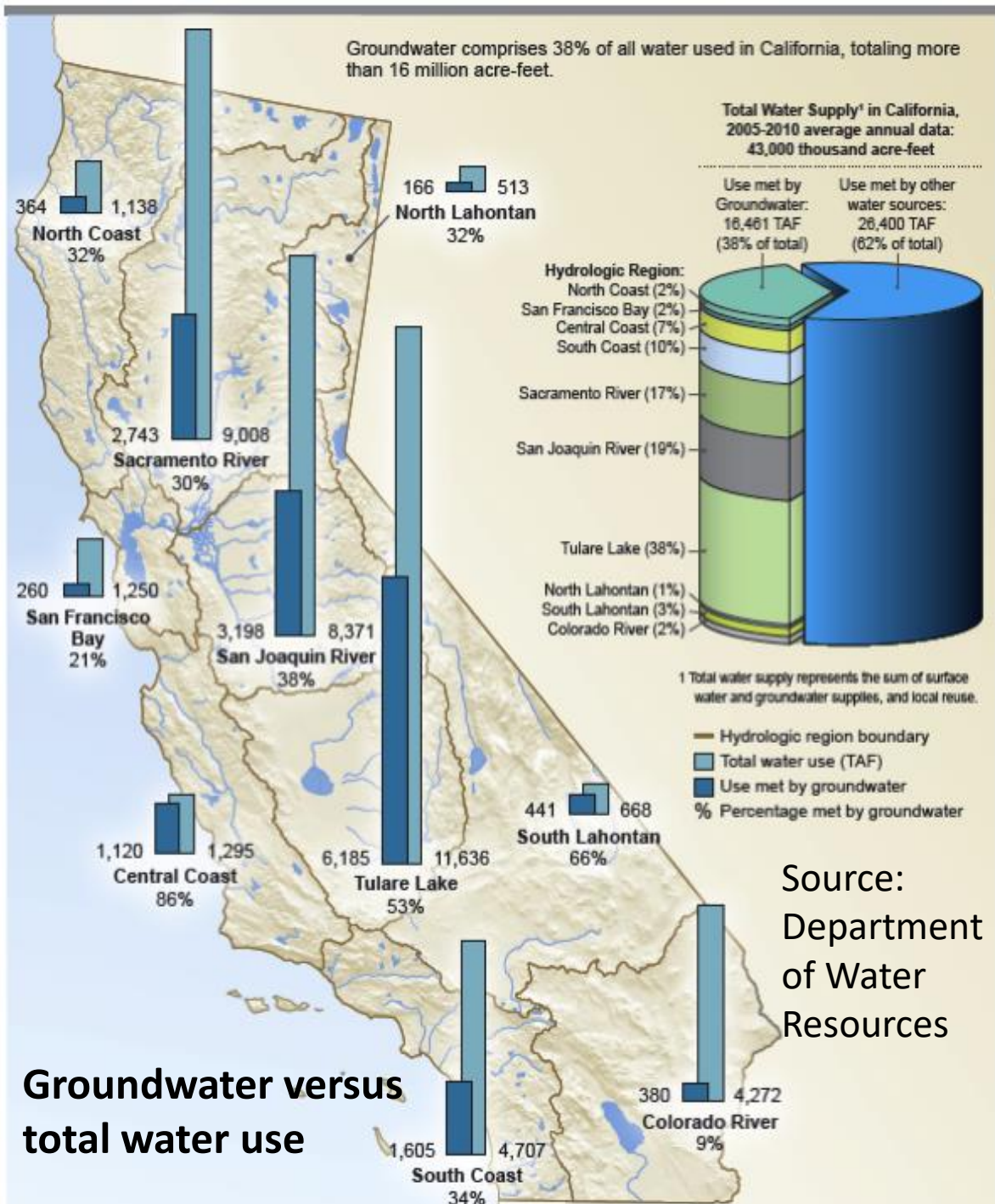
- ✧ **Existing groundwater management programs**
- ✧ **The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)**
- ✧ **Status of SGMA Implementation in Sonoma County**

Groundwater Is Essential to California

38% of state's average annual water supply

Up to 60% of water supply in dry years

Drinking water for more than 80% of Californians



Source: Department of Water Resources

Groundwater versus total water use

Groundwater Plays Important Role in Building Resiliency

Alexander Valley Study completed 2006

Sonoma County Water Agency Transmission System - Connecting Surface & Groundwater

Santa Rosa Plain Study completed 2014. Groundwater management plan since 2014

Sonoma Valley Study completed 2006. Groundwater management plan since 2007

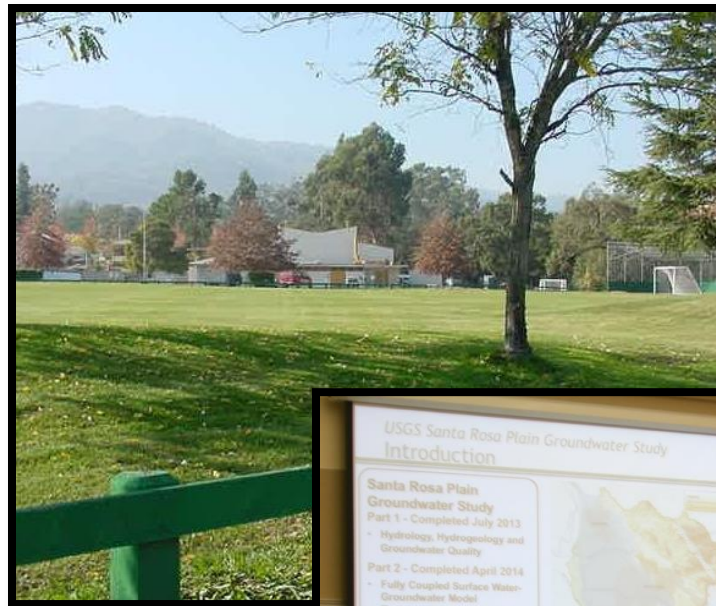
Petaluma Valley Study initiated Sept 2014

Overarching Goal: Proactive Management of Surface Water & Groundwater Resources to Promote Reliability for All Users



Existing Sonoma Valley & Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Management Plans are Non-Regulatory

- Voluntary & collaborative
- Focus on recharge, monitoring, conservation & groundwater protection
- Qualitative Basin Management Objectives
- Basins eligible for state funding
- Strong foundation for SGMA



Groundwater Management Under SGMA

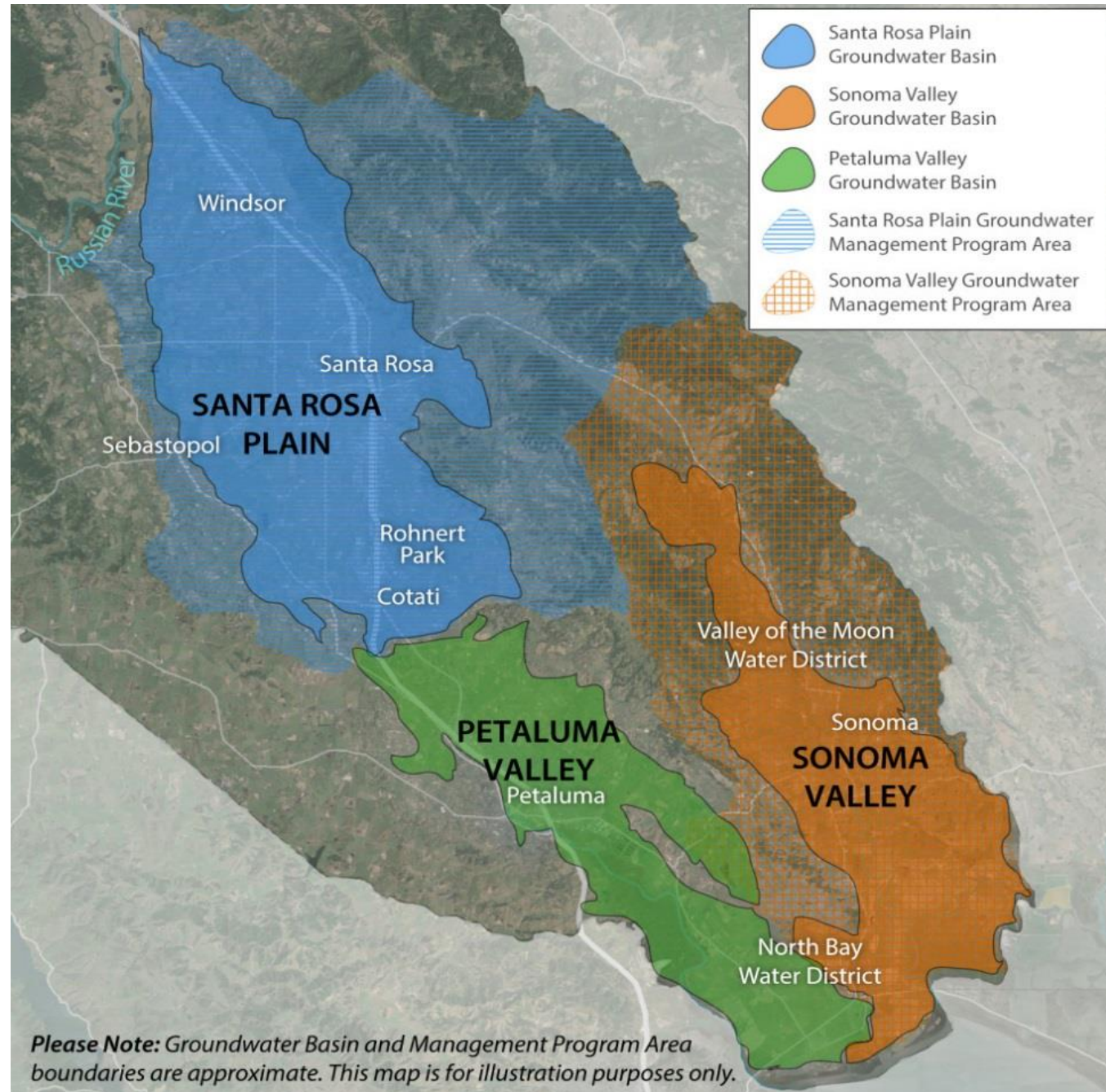
Many Things Will Change

- ✧ **No longer voluntary**
- ✧ **Measurable objectives that will achieve sustainability**
- ✧ **New authorities granted to Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs)**
- ✧ **State review of local Groundwater Sustainability Plans (GSPs)**
- ✧ **State intervention now possible if local management fails to meet SGMA requirements**

SGMA Brief Summary

Three medium
priority basins
must comply with
SGMA

- Sonoma Valley
- Petaluma
Valley
- Santa Rosa
Plain



Required Steps to Groundwater Sustainability

Step one

Form
Groundwater
Sustainability
Agency
June 30, 2017

Step two

Develop
Groundwater
Sustainability
Plan
January 31, 2022

Step three

Achieve
Sustainability
20 years after
adoption of
plan*

* DWR may grant up to two, five-year extensions on implementation upon showing of good cause and progress

State Water Resources Control Board Role

- ✧ May intervene if GSA not formed or fails to adopt and implement compliant GSP by certain dates
- ✧ Designate “probationary status” if deficiencies not addressed
- ✧ Create interim plan for basin until local GSA is able to assume responsibility
- ✧ Probationary status requires a GSA to respond to SWRCB and describe how it intends to rectify deficiencies



GSA Management Authorities under SGMA

Groundwater Sustainability Agencies have authority to:

- Conduct studies
- Register & monitor wells
- Set well spacing requirements
- Require extraction reporting
- Regulate extractions
- Implement capital projects
- Assess fees to cover costs

**Required to Develop Groundwater
Sustainability Plan by 2022**



Domestic Wells and SGMA

- **Referred to as “de minimis” users in SGMA**
 - Use 2 acre-feet per year or less for domestic purposes
- **De minimis users are subject to SGMA, depending on local needs**
 - GSAs will decide how de minimis users are incorporated
 - GSAs can decide to exclude or include
 - GSAs can decide on fees
 - GSAs *cannot* require metering
 - May be subject to reporting and fees to state if intervention occurs
- **Domestic wells can also be regulated by authorities (counties and cities, etc.) outside the scope of SGMA**

New Groundwater Sustainability Plans

Plan Requirements:

- 50-year planning horizon
- 20 years to reach sustainability
- Physical description of basin
- Measurable objectives
- Interim milestones
- Monitoring & management
- Plan exempt from CEQA



What is Sustainable Groundwater Management?

“Management and use of groundwater in a manner that can be maintained during the planning and implementation horizon without causing *undesirable results*.”

SGMA defines *undesirable results* as one or more of the following occurring in a **significant and unreasonable** manner:

- ✧ Chronic lowering of groundwater levels indicating depletion of supply
- ✧ Reductions in groundwater storage
- ✧ Seawater intrusion
- ✧ Degraded water quality
- ✧ Land subsidence
- ✧ Surface water depletions that adversely impact beneficial uses

What About Water Rights?

- ✧ Neither the SGMA nor Groundwater Sustainability Plans alter existing groundwater or surface water rights
- ✧ However, like other property rights, water rights can be regulated
- ✧ *“It is the intent of the Legislature to preserve the security of water rights in the state **to the greatest extent possible consistent with the sustainable management of groundwater.**” [Water Code §10720.1]*



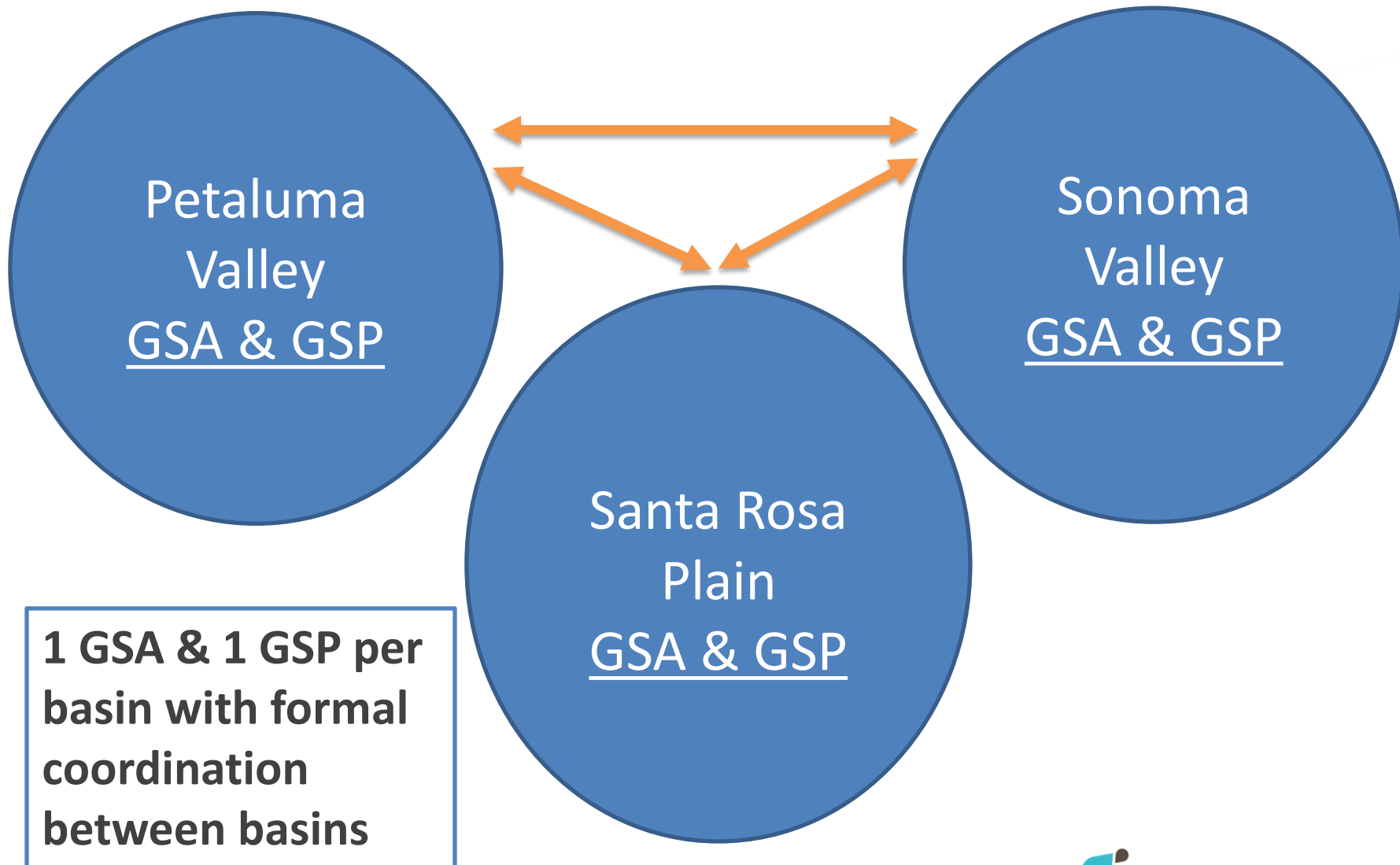
Discussing Water Rights, A Western Pastime



Forming Groundwater Sustainability Agencies

Groundwater Sustainability Governance in Sonoma County

Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) Framework Structure



Status of GSA Formation

- ✧ After 2 years of negotiation - Joint Powers Authority agreements have been approved by member agencies for each basin
- ✧ Each GSA has held public hearings and has filed documents with state to act as GSA to implement SGMA
- ✧ Advisory panels are being formed. Applications are open for each basin

Questions?

www.sonomacountygroundwater.org

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