



California Department of Water Resources  
Sustainable Groundwater Management Program

**January 2018**

Guidance Document for  
Groundwater Sustainability Plan

# Stakeholder Communication and Engagement



# Guidance Document for Groundwater Sustainability Plan Stakeholder Communication and Engagement January 2018

The objective of this guidance document is to provide Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) information to aid with stakeholder communication and engagement for Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) preparation. It provides examples and existing resources related to public engagement and effective communication for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) implementation.

## **Limitation and use of this guidance information**

This guidance document is not intended to prescribe specific outreach and communications methods for GSAs or local agencies to follow, but to provide resources and various examples for consideration. This guidance document also summarizes the public notification requirements that GSAs must adhere to in order to comply with SGMA and the GSP regulations. Other than what is required by statute or regulation, GSAs have discretion on how they communicate and engage with the beneficial uses and users of groundwater within a basin.



California Department of Water Resources  
Sustainable Groundwater Management Program  
1416 Ninth Street  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001  
[www.water.ca.gov/groundwater](http://www.water.ca.gov/groundwater)



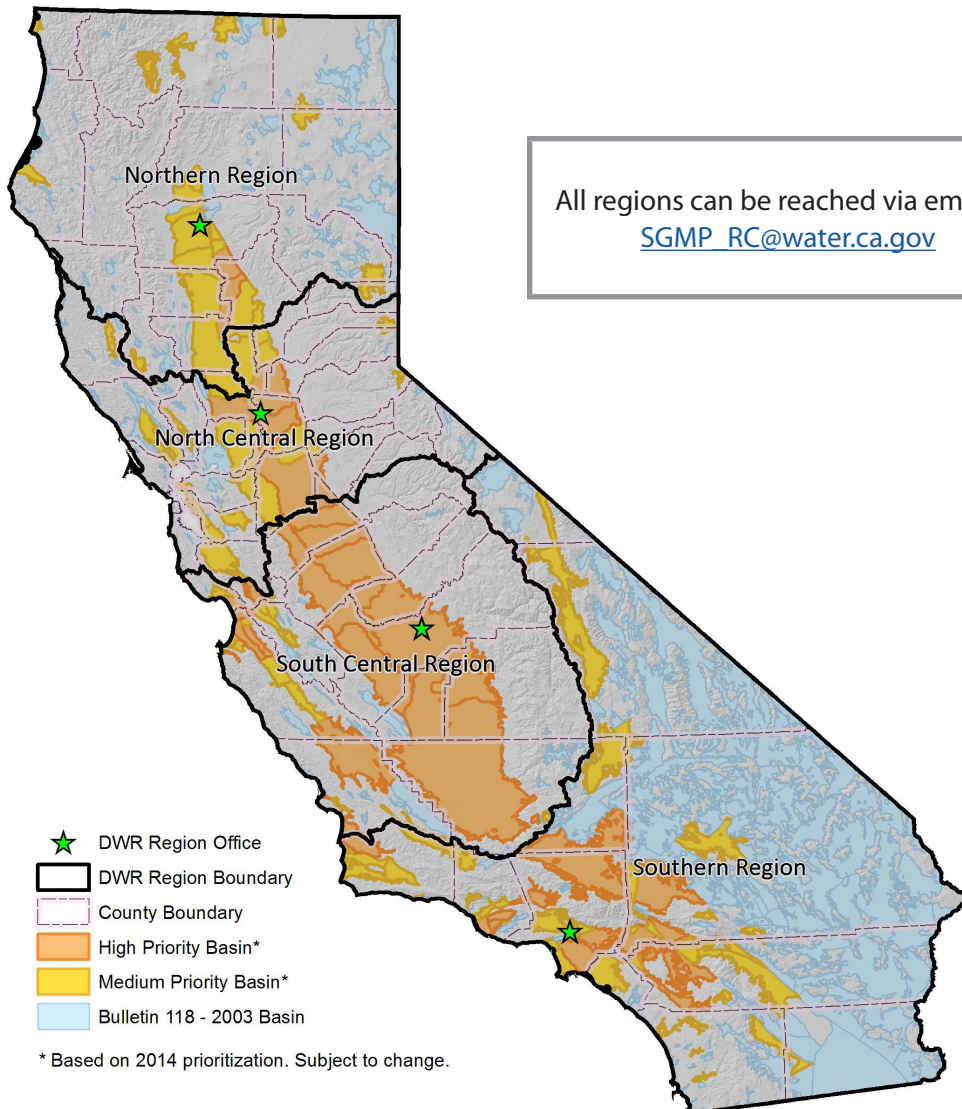
# Contents

Section 1: Overview.....	1
Section 2: About Public Engagement.....	3
Section 3: Planning Communication & Engagement.....	5
Section 4: Engagement Methods & Tools.....	14
Section 5: Additional Resources.....	15

# DWR Region Offices

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) provides a variety of SGMA-related resources to assist water management groups and the public. Four DWR Region Offices are strategically located across the state.

All high and medium priority basins are assigned a Point of Contact from DWR Region Offices. POCs assist GSAs and stakeholders in the basin to connect with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Program and locate resources for assistance. POC contacts can be found on DWR website <https://www.water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Assistance-and-Engagement>.



## Section 1

# Overview

The legislative intent of the historic 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is for groundwater to be managed sustainably in California's groundwater basins by local public agencies and newly-formed Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs).

In the basins designated by the Department of Water Resources (DWR) as medium and high priority, local public agencies and GSAs are required to develop and implement groundwater sustainability plans (GSPs) or alternatives to GSPs (Alternatives).

Under the requirements of SGMA, GSAs must consider interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater. As a result, the GSP development needs to consider effects to other stakeholder groups in or around the groundwater basin with overlapping interests. These interests include, but are not limited to, holders of overlying groundwater rights (including agriculture users and domestic well owners), public water systems, local land use planning agencies, environmental users, surface water users, federal government, California Native American tribes, and disadvantaged communities (Water Code 10723.2).

Furthermore, the GSP Regulations require that GSAs document in a communication section of the GSP the opportunities for public engagement and active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the basin. Expertise of stakeholders may increase the chance that the GSAs are using best available information and best available science for GSP development.

As GSAs begin to meet to develop a GSP, common questions, such as the ones below, are considered regarding stakeholder communication and engagement.

### ***How can a GSA effectively communicate and engage with multiple and varied stakeholders?***

This document helps GSAs determine who the interested parties are (individuals, organizations, local agencies) that they need to engage with and provides guidance to better understand their issues and interests of beneficial uses and users of groundwater.

### ***What are methods and tools for communications and engagement?***

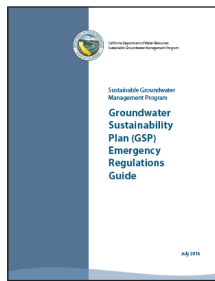
This document provides links to methods and tools that can be modified and used to reach and communicate with stakeholders. Not all of the tools will be applicable to all GSAs, but they are presented as examples of effective ways to engage.

### ***How can a GSA conduct meaningful engagement to develop a GSP?***

This document gives GSAs a step-by-step example of how to communicate and engage with stakeholder groups. In addition to following the procedure requirements for public notice, meaningful engagement is to integrate stakeholders throughout the development of a GSP and allow active participation in the decision-making process. The benefits of meaningful engagement are improved outcomes, optimized resources, broad support, and reduced conflict.

## Published Resources

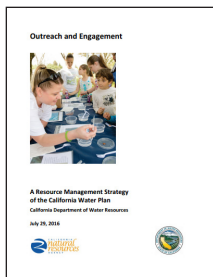
There are several published documents that either directly or indirectly address best practices or statutory requirements for stakeholder engagement. In addition to the information in this guidance document, these documents may be useful for GSAs while developing a Communication and Engagement (C&E) Plan or other outreach programs.



### **Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) Emergency Regulations Guide,** California Department of Water Resources

This guide (published July 2016) includes information to aid with the understanding of

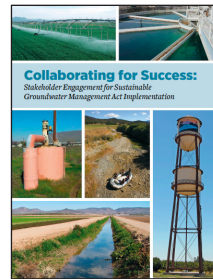
the GSP Regulations. It explains the fundamental concepts of the regulations and contains information directly relevant to the regulations through four general phases of development and implementation. <https://goo.gl/QYwqT9>



### **Outreach and Engagement: A Resource Management Strategy for the California Water Plan,** California Department of Water Resources

The California Water Plan provides a broad set of

resource management strategies (RMSs) that can help local agencies and government (and GSAs) manage their water and related resources. While not specific to SGMA, the Outreach and Engagement RMS directly addresses water management in California and discusses tools and practices by water agencies to facilitate contributions by public individuals and groups toward good water management outcomes. <https://goo.gl/YfQQcu>

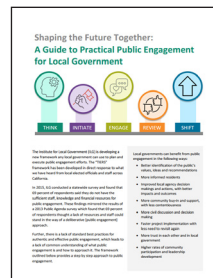


### **Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation,** Community Water Center

Prepared by the Community Water Center in July 2015,

the intent of this report is to convey the value of stakeholder engagement to sustainable groundwater management. The report outlines the statutory requirements for stakeholder engagement in SGMA, gives examples of best practices and examples of collaborative management from around the state, and provides a recommended roadmap for effective stakeholder engagement drawn specifically for SGMA implementation.

[http://www.cleanwateraction.org/files/publications/ca/SGMA\\_Stakeholder\\_Engagement\\_White\\_Paper.pdf](http://www.cleanwateraction.org/files/publications/ca/SGMA_Stakeholder_Engagement_White_Paper.pdf)

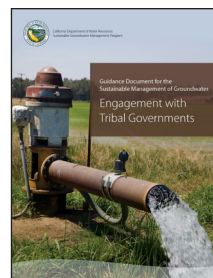


### **Inclusive Public Engagement,** Institute for Local Government (ILG)

This report offers tip sheets and resources to effectively and successfully plan and implement successful engagement strategies. Whether it's supporting and connecting with local leadership

programs as a pipeline to engage specific populations, or partnering with local community-based organizations to reach beyond the small slice of the public that most frequently attends meetings, ILG's inclusive public engagement resources will offer perspective to any planning process.

<http://www.ca-ilg.org/inclusive-public-engagement>



### **Engagement with Tribal Governments Guidance Document (Draft),** California Department of Water Resources

This document is meant to help local agencies engage with a Tribal government in the planning, financing, and management of a

GSA, or with development or implementation of a GSP.

Section 2

# About Public Engagement

## What is Public Engagement?

As defined by the Center for Advances in Public Engagement:

***Public engagement is a process that brings people together to address issues of common importance, to solve shared problems, and to bring about positive social change.***

Effective public engagement invites citizens to get involved in deliberation, dialogue, and action on public issues that they care about. It helps leaders and decision makers better understand the perspectives, opinions, and concerns of citizens and stakeholders.

When done well, public engagement goes far beyond the usual participants to include those members of the community whose voices have traditionally been left out of political and policy debates.

### Public Engagement Benefits

- **Helps** people weigh a variety of perspectives and listen to each other's views.
- **Builds** common understanding, manages differences, and establishes direction for moving ahead on tough issues.
- **Builds** trust and improves communication between the public and leaders.
- **Creates** new opportunities for citizens to become involved in public problem solving and decision making.


## Build Public Engagement for Regional Sustainability

Many areas have public engagement efforts already in place for other water management efforts such as Integrated Regional Water Management Plans and Groundwater Management Plans. Use these existing stakeholder connections as you begin your SGMA-related communication and engagement efforts. Collectively, all water management plans work with a shared interest toward the ultimate goal of regional sustainability.

## Levels of Engagement

It is important that stakeholders understand the role they are invited to play in a public engagement program. This will help provide clarity to the process and help avoid misunderstandings. Stakeholder roles may naturally evolve over the period that they are engaged in a public process, and as transition occurs, it is wise to redefine these roles. When an advisory committee or partnership between public agencies is established, it is helpful to develop a charter or other memo of understanding that describes the roles and responsibilities of all involved.

**Figure 1** is a summary of the levels of public engagement that comes from the International Association of Public Participation.

	<b>INCREASING LEVEL OF PUBLIC IMPACT</b> 				
	<b>Inform</b>	<b>Consult</b>	<b>Involve</b>	<b>Collaborate</b>	<b>Empower</b>
<b>Public participation goal</b>	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities, and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives, and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
<b>Promise to the public</b>	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
<b>Example techniques</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fact sheets</li> <li>• Web sites</li> <li>• Open houses</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Public comment</li> <li>• Focus groups</li> <li>• Surveys</li> <li>• Public meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Workshops</li> <li>• Deliberate polling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen advisory committees</li> <li>• Consensus-building</li> <li>• Participatory decision-making</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizen juries</li> <li>• Ballots</li> <li>• Delegated decision</li> </ul>

**Figure 1. International Association of Public Participation (IAP2) Spectrum of Public Participation**



## Section 3

# Planning Communication & Engagement

***Stakeholder engagement can allow agencies to leverage networks and resources to their advantage and can provide a means whereby agencies can capitalize on local knowledge, including the expertise, resources, and capacity of individual stakeholders.***

— *Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation, Community Water Center*

There are four phases of SGMA implementation as illustrated in the diagram on pages 12 and 13. The statutory requirements for engagement are summarized for each phase. The other relevant sections of the Water Code and GSP Regulations are also provided for reference.

Phase 1 (GSA formation and coordination) was completed June 30, 2017 per SGMA. GSA formation and coordination has helped start relationship building and shared understanding with stakeholders. As GSAs move forward with Phase 2 (GSP preparation and submission), successful communication and engagement (C&E) with stakeholders will require up-front resource commitments and planning.

GSP Regulations (Section 354.10) require a communication section to include the following:

1. An explanation of the Agency's (GSAs) decision-making process.
2. Identification of opportunities for public engagement and a discussion of how public input and response will be used.
3. A description of how the Agency (GSA) encourages the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the basin.
4. The method the Agency (GSA) shall follow to inform the public about progress implementing the Plan, including the status of projects and actions.

DWR will assess, as part of GSP Regulations Section 355.4, whether the interests of the beneficial uses and users of groundwater in the basin, as well as the land uses and property interests potentially affected by the use of groundwater in the basin, have been considered. DWR will take into account comments made in accordance with GSP Regulations Section 353.8 when determining whether interests within the basin have been considered in the development and operation of the GSA and the development and implementation of the GSP.

The following guidance for planning communication and engagement is adaptable for basin-wide application. In instances where there are multiple GSAs covering a basin, GSAs should coordinate with each other to ensure that all stakeholders are identified for outreach and are informed through the process of other SGMA implementation efforts within the basin that may affect them. This means a GSA may need to outreach to stakeholders outside of their boundaries to ensure all beneficial uses and users are included in the GSP development process.

## Communication & Engagement Steps

Communication and Engagement (C&E) consists of seven general steps. These steps are illustrated in Figure 2 and explained in further detail below.

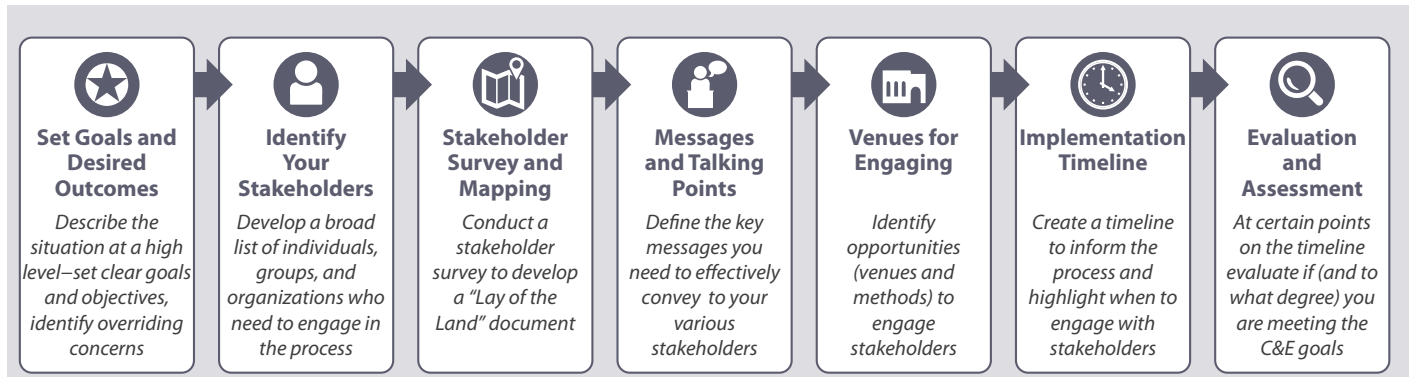


Figure 2. Communication and Engagement Steps



### Set Goals and Desired Outcomes

Start by providing a description and background of your GSA and explain the intent of C&E is to support the development of your GSP. Then define in simple terms the challenge, regulatory requirement, or opportunity, and the desired outcome.

#### Answer these questions:

- What are we trying to accomplish?
- How will we know if we are successful?
- What are the challenges or barriers?
- What are the opportunities?
- What is the timeframe?
- When will public input be relevant?
- How will public input be used?



### Identify Your Stakeholders

Identify the many interested individuals and groups you expect to engage with or inform at any stage of the GSP process.

#### Answer these questions when making your list:

- Who has a financial, political, business, or personal stake in this issue? (*i.e. organizational mission, regulatory role, land ownership, etc.*)
- What organization, agency, or individual must be involved in the GSP process for it to proceed? (*Due to organizational mission, regulatory role, landownership, etc.*)
- What organizations, agencies, or individuals are likely to have an interest in this effort, or be impacted by the development of your GSP? (*Due to organizational mission, or established interest in subject matter.*)

Use the following chart to stimulate brainstorming about who should be invited to engage in your GSP development. The category of interest intends to reflect “diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population”. The list is not exclusive. GSAs are encouraged to add other interested persons or groups as needs are identified.

**Stakeholder Engagement Chart for GSP Development**

Category of Interest	Examples of Stakeholder Groups
General Public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Citizens groups</li> <li>• Community leader</li> </ul>
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Municipalities (City leaders, County planning departments)</li> <li>• Regional land use agencies</li> </ul>
Private users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Private pumpers</li> <li>• Domestic users</li> <li>• Schools and colleges</li> <li>• Hospitals</li> </ul>
Urban/ Agriculture users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water agencies</li> <li>• Irrigation districts</li> <li>• Municipal water companies</li> <li>• Resource conservation districts</li> <li>• Farmers/Farm Bureaus</li> </ul>
Industrial users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial and industrial self-suppliers; groups</li> <li>• Local trade association or group</li> </ul>
Environmental and Ecosystem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Federal and State agencies (Fish and Wildlife)</li> <li>• Wetland managers</li> <li>• Environmental groups</li> </ul>
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Chambers of commerce</li> <li>• Business groups/associations</li> <li>• Elected officials (Board of Supervisors, City Council members)</li> <li>• State Assembly members</li> <li>• State Senators</li> </ul>
Human right to water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disadvantaged Communities</li> <li>• Small community systems</li> <li>• Environmental Justice Groups</li> </ul>
Tribes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tribal Government</li> </ul>
Federal and State lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Military bases/Department of Defense</li> <li>• Forest Service</li> <li>• National Park Services</li> <li>• Bureau of Land Management</li> <li>• California Department of Fish and Wildlife</li> </ul>
Integrated Water Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regional water management groups (IRWM regions)</li> <li>• Flood agencies</li> <li>• Recycled water coalition</li> </ul>

SGMA (Section 10723.2) calls for consideration of all interests of **all beneficial uses and users** of groundwater:

The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans. These interests include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(a) Holders of overlying groundwater rights, including:

- (1) Agricultural users.
- (2) Domestic well owners.

(b) Municipal well operators.

(c) Public water systems.

(d) Local land use planning agencies.

(e) Environmental users of groundwater.

(f) Surface water users, if there is a hydrologic connection between surface and groundwater bodies.

(g) The federal government, including, but not limited to, the military and managers of federal lands.

(h) California Native American tribes.

(i) Disadvantaged communities, including, but not limited to, those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems.

(j) Entities listed in Section 10927 that are monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations in all or a part of a groundwater basin managed by the groundwater sustainability agency.

Resources to help identify and contact stakeholders are provided in the [Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Digital Toolkit](#) and Appendix B of [Community Water Center's Collaborating for Success: Stakeholder Engagement for Sustainable Groundwater Management Act Implementation](#) includes suggested resources.



## Stakeholder Survey and Mapping

Contact each stakeholder organization to learn more about them, describe the project, and invite them to engage in the process. Prepare for your first meeting with project background, necessary maps, and a stakeholder survey. Also be prepared to convene a follow up meeting within a week or two, to answer questions that come up during this meeting.

Develop a set of questions to use in a one-on-one meeting with a stakeholder group. This meeting will give you answers to help you understand stakeholder interests, issues, and challenges.

An example of a **stakeholder survey** can be downloaded from the online [digital toolkit](#). Consider surveying communities using their most often used languages (i.e. Spanish).

### Examples of questions in a survey include:

- Are you familiar with SGMA regulations?
- Are you currently engaged in activities or discussions regarding groundwater management in this region?
- Do you own, manage, or operate land in this basin?
- Do you manage water resources? If yes, what is your role?
- Are bilingual information and meeting materials needed?

Using the information gathered during your meetings with stakeholder organizations, create a stakeholder mapping grid by doing a “Lay of the Land” exercise. The exercise will chart all of the stakeholder groups you decide are important to the public engagement program and list known issues, interests, challenges, preferred methods of communication, and strategies and roles for engagement.

A “**Lay of the Land**” exercise example can be downloaded from the online [digital toolkit](#).

### Examples of information included in the “Lay of the Land” exercise include:

- Types of stakeholders
- Stakeholder key interests related to groundwater
- Key documented issues



## Messages

Define the key messages you need to effectively convey to your various stakeholders. Key messages should be three overriding messages that explain the goals and outcomes for development of the GSP.

- **Key message 1:** Concise explanation of the goal of the C&E strategy to support the development of a successful GSP
- **Key message 2:** The GSA is committed to working with identified stakeholders using an open and transparent communication and engagement process
- **Key message 3:** The overall GSP will be more successful with an engaged group of stakeholders providing useful information

It would also be helpful to develop a set of talking points that can be used by members of your GSA when communicating with specific stakeholder groups. These talking points can also be customized to a specific group.

Another useful tool is a Q&A document that contains likely questions or responses you anticipate from stakeholder groups based on the issues, challenges, and interests you discovered in the mapping exercise.



## Venues for Engaging

You must decide on the scale of the public engagement necessary to achieve the goals and objectives of your C&E strategy. This will help you determine the best venue for your information and messages to be heard. It is important to regularly provide feedback and updates to the interested persons and stakeholder groups who provide input to the GSP through public convenings. Invite the public to meetings at key milestones to learn and contribute input. You should also consider how public comments will be received, reviewed, and responded to.

Water Code Section 10723.4 requires GSAs to establish and maintain an interested persons list; regular notifications to persons on this list should be one of the venues used for public engagement.

### Convenings

- Community issue-specific or location-specific advisory committees
- Small group briefings or workshops at key milestones to learn and contribute input

### Presentations

- Presentations by lead public agencies to small or large groups at scheduled events
- Presentations by lead public agencies to elected officials at publicly noticed meetings

### Digital

- Public-facing website or webpage, regularly updated and easily accessible
- Online resources, posted for interactive or non-interactive uses
- Regular updates shared via social media, email, or newsletters

### Community, regional, and social media

- Submit/post regular updates to media that promote opportunities for public engagement
- Submit/post regular updates to media that provide information about how public input is being used, project status, and next opportunities for engagement

### Advisory Committees

GSAs may appoint and consult with an advisory committee. A properly developed and engaged advisory body can be of great assistance in engaging the broad range of interest groups in a basin and creating a shared understanding of local sustainability.



### Inform Your Stakeholders

- Invest in signs and banners to announce meetings
- Hand out fliers at key public locations to reach the general public
- Personally call stakeholder groups
- Mail and email meeting announcements
- Post on social media pages

Groundwater Sustainability Agency Stakeholder Meeting, April 2017

### **Professional Facilitators**

Many public agencies find it helpful to engage the services of a professional facilitator to guide discussions and decision-making between partnering agencies and other interested parties.

Professional facilitators, with deep expertise in mediation, negotiation, and consensus building, help broker agreements in tough natural resources disputes. Professional facilitators actively manage a process to support stakeholders' desired outcomes. They work closely with all stakeholders to design an effective process, manage meetings, seek input between meetings, and strategize throughout to deliver widely supported decisions.



### **Implementation Timeline**

Now that you've identified your stakeholders, your key messages, and where and when to engage with them, you'll need to create a timeline for your C&E strategy. Don't confuse this with an implementation timeline for your GSP. The C&E timeline tracks communication and engagement activities and tactics.

Here is a list of common C&E tactics to include in a timeline:

- Website launch
- When to send email or other digital communication
- Media outreach activities
- Public meetings



### **Evaluation and Assessment**

At various points along the implementation timeline, stop and assess how well you are performing against your goals and objectives. You can redirect resources, update strategies, or introduce new tactics.

The following questions as listed in the [Collaborating for Success report](#) are useful metrics for evaluation. Surveys and interviews are good tools to obtain feedback.

- Are stakeholders educated about the GSP development process and their own role?
- Is the timeline for implementation of the GSP clear?
- Has the GSA received positive press coverage?
- Do diverse stakeholders feel included?
- Have there been behavior changes related to the program goals? Or improved trust/relationships among participants?

## Sample C&E Plan Outline

This example outline is a tool for GSAs to create common understanding and transparency throughout the GSP preparation and submission process. This process should be tailored to the basins and stakeholder needs. Documentation of the engagement and outreach by GSAs is important for Phase 3 (GSP review and evaluation). GSAs could evaluate the successes and learn from the stakeholder feedback to make necessary adjustments in order to achieve their goals.

### Sample C&E Plan Outline

1. **Set Goals and Desired Outcomes**
  - a. Description and background of the GSA and subsequent GSP
    - i. Explanation of your GSA's decision-making process
  - b. Goal/desired outcomes of GSP development
  - c. Communication objectives to support the GSP
  - d. Overriding concerns, major concerns or challenges
2. **Identify Your Stakeholders**

See stakeholder engagement chart example provided in [digital toolkit](#).

  - a. List the stakeholder groups, community organizations or others who are concerned about the GSA/GSP and how each group will engage with the development of the GSP
3. **Stakeholder survey and mapping**

See example provided in [digital toolkit](#).

  - a. Meet one on one with stakeholders and ask them a set of questions to help find out their issues, interests and challenges
  - b. Compile a "Lay of the Land" document of your stakeholders to identify how to engage with them
4. **Messages and Talking Points**

Define the key messages you need to effectively convey to your various stakeholders

  - a. Key messages: Three overriding messages that explain the goals and outcomes for development of the GSP
  - b. Talking points/Q&A: Anticipating likely questions or issues will support effective engagement with stakeholders
  - c. Likely questions or issues and responses
5. **Venues for Engaging**

Identify the opportunities – venues or methods – to engage stakeholders.

  - a. Depending on the level of engagement, you'll want to determine the venue and how to share your key messages
  - b. Determine how you will invite, inform, and follow up with stakeholders
6. **Implementation Timeline**

List the milestones and stakeholder engagement opportunities throughout the GSP development process.

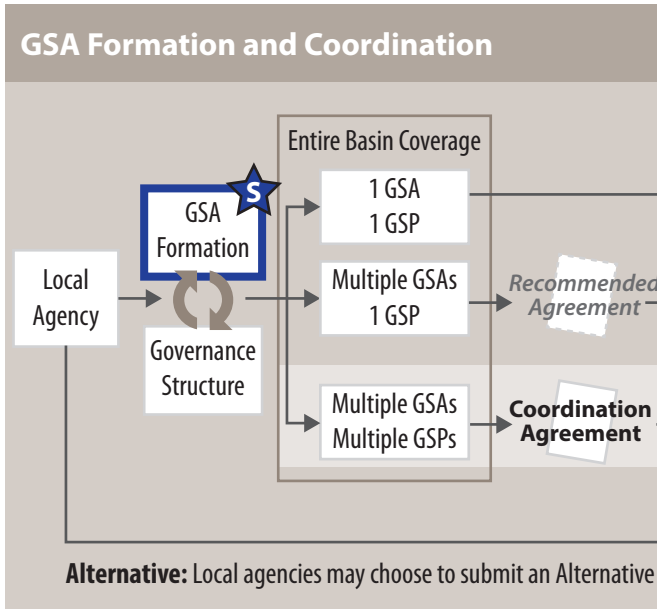
  - a. C&E Plan and GSP milestones
    - i. Refer to the Stakeholder Engagement by Phase graphic for required engagement milestones
  - b. Supporting tactics: Include tactics or tools you will use to communicate your messages and resources available to support
    - i. Website launch
    - ii. When to send email or other digital communication
    - iii. Media outreach activities
    - iv. Community meetings
7. **Evaluation and Assessment**

Assess at various points during Implementation to evaluate how your plan is performing against your goals and objectives.

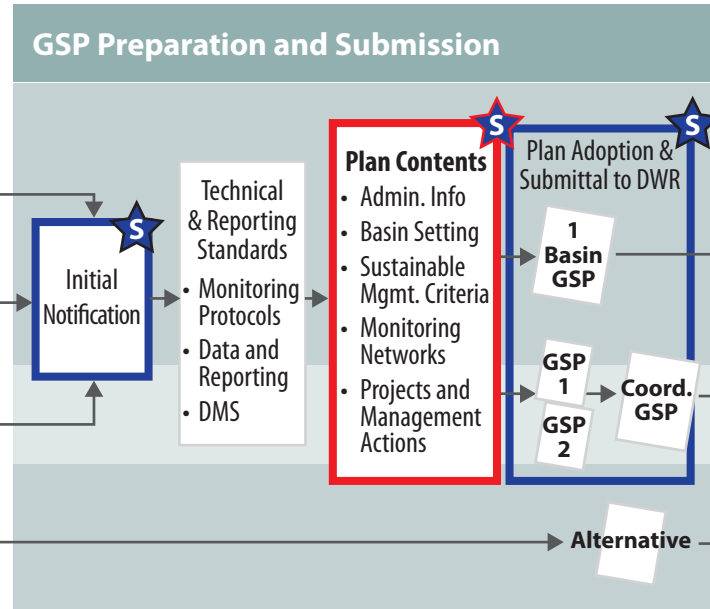
  - a. What worked well?
  - b. What didn't work as planned?
  - c. Meeting recaps with next steps
  - d. Lessons learned
  - e. Budget analysis

## Stakeholder Engagement Requirements by Phase

### Phase 1: 2015–2017



### Phase 2: 2017–2022



#### Phase 1 Engagement Requirements

- **Establish and Maintain List of Interested Parties** §10723.4
  - **GSA Formation Public Notice** §10723(b)
  - **GSA Formation Public Hearing** §10723(b)
  - **GSA Formation (due 6/30/17)** §10723(b)
  - **Notify DWR:**
    - › Include list of interested parties
    - › Explain how parties' interests will be considered
  - **Pre-GSP Development** §10727.8
- Provide a written statement describing how interested parties may participate to:
- › DWR
  - › Cities within the GSA boundary
  - › Counties within the GSA boundary

#### Phase 2 Engagement Requirements

- **GSP Initial Notification** §353.6\*
  - › GSAs are required to submit GSP Initial Notifications through the SGMA Portal - GSP Initial Notification System at <http://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/#gsp>
  - › Public can comment on the submitted GSP notification
- **GSP Preparation** §10727.8 and §10723.2
  - › Encourage active involvement
  - › Consider beneficial uses and users of groundwater when describing *Undesirable Results, Minimum Thresholds, and Projects & Actions*
- **GSP Communications Section** §354.10\*
  - › GSA decision-making process
  - › Opportunities for engagement and how public input is used
  - › How GSA encourages active involvement
  - › Method of informing the public
- **Public Notice of Proposed Adoption** §10728.4
- **GSP Adoption Public Hearing** §10728.4
- **GSP Submittal** §354.10\*
  - › Include a summary of communications: description of beneficial uses/users, list of public meetings, comments received/responses



Stakeholder Input



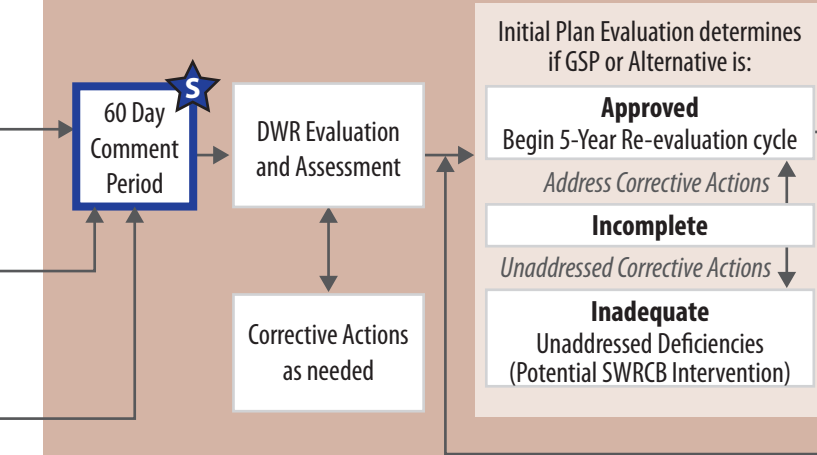
Stakeholders should be informed throughout the development of Plan Content

Code References: §(#) = SGMA, §(#) = GSP Regulations



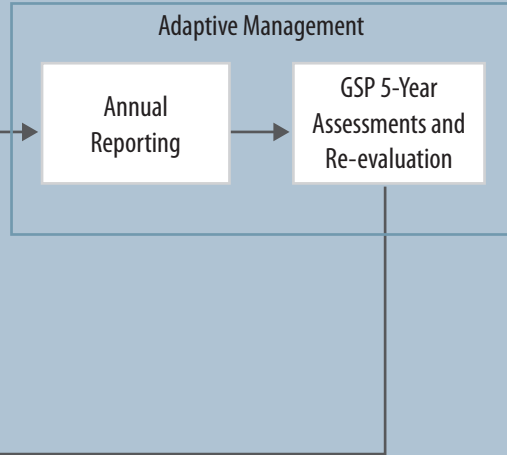
### Phase 3: 2018+

#### GSP Review and Evaluation



### Phase 4: 2022+

#### Implementation and Reporting



#### Phase 3 Engagement Requirements

- **60 Day Comment Period** §353.8\*
  - › Any person may provide comments to DWR regarding a proposed or adopted GSP via the SGMA Portal at <http://sgma.water.ca.gov/portal/>
  - › Comments will be posted to DWR's website

#### Phase 4 Engagement Requirements

- **Public Notices and Meetings** §10730
  - › Before amending a GSP
  - › Prior to imposing or increasing a fee
- **Encourage Active Involvement** §10727.8

#### Engagement Requirements Applicable to ALL PHASES

- **Beneficial Uses and Users** §10723.2  
Consider interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater
- **Advisory Committee** §10727.8  
GSA may appoint and consult with an advisory committee
- **Public Notices and Meetings** §10730
  - › Before electing to be a GSA
  - › Before adopting or amending a GSP
  - › Prior to imposing or increasing a fee
- **Encourage Active Involvement** §10727.8  
Encourage the active involvement of diverse social, cultural, and economic elements of the population within the groundwater basin
- **Native American Tribes** §10720.3
  - › May voluntarily agree to participate
  - › See Engagement with Tribal Government Guidance Document
- **Federal Government** §10720.3
  - › May voluntarily agree to participate

Section 4

# Engagement Methods & Tools

## Stakeholder Communication and Engagement Digital Toolkit

A set of tools and examples are available for the purposes of SGMA outreach at DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management website. The examples from local SGMA work groups include agenda, basin fact sheet, newsletter, mailing list sign up, etc. The templates may be downloaded, modified, and tailored to specific needs and audiences. While not all tools and templates are applicable to all GSAs, they are available as examples of effective ways to engage.

**Find the Digital Toolkit at:**

<https://www.water.ca.gov/Programs/Groundwater-Management/Assistance-and-Engagement>

DWR will add additional resources and case studies as they are developed to the Digital Toolkit.

## Section 5

# Additional Resources

## DWR Region Office Contacts

DWR has knowledgeable staff available at the four region offices located across the State and in Sacramento. DWR's regional coordinators along with the [Point of Contacts](#) (POCs) are available to answer questions and provide available assistance and resources. The Regional Coordinators can answer SGMA related questions, provide educational presentations, discuss facilitation support services, and put you in contact with SGMA program contacts and other State and federal agencies. DWR Regional Coordinators can be reached via email at [SGMP\\_RC@water.ca.gov](mailto:SGMP_RC@water.ca.gov).

## Integrated Regional Water Management

Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) is a collaborative effort to identify and implement water management solutions on a regional scale that increase regional self-reliance, reduce conflict, and manage water to concurrently achieve social, environmental, and economic objectives. DWR, through the IRWM grant program, worked with 49 IRWM regions to coordinate regional water management activities and implemented multi-benefit projects with local agencies. Stakeholder communication and engagement plays a key role in the successes of the IRWM. Information about these activities is available at: <https://www.water.ca.gov/Programs/Integrated-Regional-Water-Management>

## Other Agency Information

### **State Water Resources Control Board**

In areas where groundwater users and local agencies are unable or unwilling to sustainably manage their groundwater, SGMA authorizes State Water Resources Control Board (State Board) intervention.

[http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/gmp/about.shtml#info](http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/gmp/about.shtml#info)

**Contact** Email: [groundwater\\_management@waterboards.ca.gov](mailto:groundwater_management@waterboards.ca.gov) T: (916) 650-0474

### **California Department of Fish and Wildlife Groundwater Program**

CDFW developed a Groundwater Program to ensure fish and wildlife resources reliant upon groundwater are addressed in GSPs and that CDFW remains in compliance with regulatory requirements.

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Watersheds/Groundwater>

### **Federal Agencies**

GSAs can locate federal lands under various federal government jurisdiction (i.e. Bureau of Indian Affairs, Bureau of Land Management, National Parks Service, Department of Defense, Fish and Wildlife Services) from the Water Management Planning Tool under the Federal Lands layer. <https://gis.water.ca.gov/app/boundaries/>

The federal government may voluntarily agree to participate in the preparation or administration of a GSP through a joint powers authority or other agreement with local agencies in the basin. The GSAs should work to include federal interests in all aspects of the public process. Successful examples include ex-officio liaison on the GSA Board and membership on technical and public advisory committees.



California Department of Water Resources  
1416 Ninth Street  
P.O. Box 942836  
Sacramento, CA 94236-0001

<http://www.water.ca.gov>