

SGMA and the Human Right to Water

Opportunities and challenges in 2016 and beyond

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Photo credit:
Bear Guerra

Community Water Center

- Mission: The Community Water Center (CWC) acts as a catalyst for community-driven water solutions through organizing, education and advocacy in California's San Joaquin Valley.
- Vision: All communities have access to safe, clean, and affordable drinking water.



California's drinking water crisis:

- In 2014, more than a million Californian's received water that did not meet safe drinking water standards
- At least 296 small community water systems have consistently failed to provide safe drinking water for years or even decades
- 2,568 reported well failures state-wide

Photo credit:
Michael Robinson Chavez
Los Angeles Times

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

- The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) was signed by Governor Brown in 2014 and went into effect in 2015.
- First time groundwater will be regulated by the state
- Three part process for ensuring “sustainability”
 1. Develop agencies responsible for groundwater management
 2. Develop plans to achieve groundwater sustainability
 3. Implement plans and achieve sustainability

SGMA Implementation and Stakeholder Engagement

- What does "consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater" in SGMA really entail?
- What constitutes "encourage the active involvement of a diverse social, cultural and economic elements of the population"?

GSA formation - How it is working so far?

- The good:
 - Attention to governance
 - Rhetoric of inclusion
- The bad:
 - Proliferation of GSAs
 - Same actors at the table
- Emerging issues: Communication, capacity, transparency, resources and power disparities

Looking forward:

- Invest in capacity building and engagement now
- State guidance, best practices and information sharing
- Don't lose sight of the opportunity at hand



Thank you!

www.communitywatercenter.org



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CWaterC



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Seville

Tulare County
47 mg/L
Nitrates over MCL

Seville

Tulare County
47 mg/L
Nitrates over MCL

Cutler

Tulare County
.25 Ug/L
DBCP over MCL

East Orosi

Tulare County
45 Mg/L
Nitrates over MCL