With passage of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA) we are entering a new era in groundwater management in California, an era that will present considerable challenges for water agencies, groundwater managers, and groundwater users. Understanding these challenges and clearly identifying potential solutions are imperative to timely and successful implementation of the new law with minimal disruption to ongoing economic activities and the natural environment. These challenges, and their potential solutions are the focus of this conference.

The conference consists of five panels addressing key topics in implementation of the SGMA. Each panel will begin with brief talks that are intended to highlight potential challenges and foster dialogue amongst the larger group. Of critical importance to the success of each panel, and to the conference as a whole, is the dialogue generated among the larger group during each session.

Conference expectations and intended outcomes include:

1. Active sharing and participant discussion focusing on areas of concern in implementing the new groundwater legislation.
2. Prioritizing of the most pressing issues in bill implementation and identification of the agencies currently working to address these issues.
3. Identifying potential research areas, strategies and best management practice recommendations that would aid in Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) formation and Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) implementation.
4. Forging potential collaborations to address various aspects of bill implementation.

AGENDA

Day 1 – January 27: Identifying Barriers

Location: Graduate School of Business, Bass Center, Seawell Family Boardroom, 4th Floor, 645 Knight Way, Stanford

7:45 Shuttle Pickup at the Sheraton Hotel
8:00 – 8:30 Breakfast and Coffee
8:30 – 9:00 Welcome and Introductions
   • Tara Moran, Sustainable Groundwater Program Lead at Stanford University’s Water in the West
   • Daniel Wendell, Senior Groundwater Scientist at The Nature Conservancy
9:00 – 10:50  Session 1: Overview and key issues of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

This panel will provide an overview of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (SGMA), current efforts by DWR in implementing the bill, as well as discussions of sustainable yield and how it may be apportioned under the statute.

Moderator: Lester Snow, Executive Director of the California Water Foundation
• Gary Bardini, Deputy Director of the California Department of Water Resources
• Felicia Marcus, Chair of the State Water Resources Control Board
• Maurice Hall, Science and Engineering Lead at The Nature Conservancy
• Russell McGlothlin, Shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

Mr. Bardini will provide background information on the SGMA and will talk about some of DWR’s current efforts, as well as the role DWR expects to play during bill implementation. He will also outline areas and topics where DWR would like to see collaboration and/or feedback from research institutes, groundwater management agencies, NGOs etc. in establishing criteria for bill implementation. Felicia Marcus will discuss the role of the State Water Resources Board in implementation and oversight of the SGMA. Maurice Hall, will talk about sustainable yield, how it is defined under the SGMA, and some of the challenges that he expects in achieving it. Russell McGlothlin, who helped draft the SGMA, will talk about sustainable yield, property rights, and the interplay between the SGMA and future groundwater adjudications.

10:50 – 11:05  Break

11:05 – 12:30  Session 2: What is successful groundwater management? How do we achieve it?

This panel will highlight some of the common attributes of successful groundwater management agencies, some of the innovative tools and processes that groundwater managers throughout the state are using, as well as ongoing challenges in achieving sustainable groundwater management.

Moderator: Buzz Thompson, Perry L. McCarty Director and Senior Fellow at Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment
• Daniel Wendell, Senior Groundwater Scientist at The Nature Conservancy
• Rebecca Nelson, Non-Resident Fellow at Stanford University’s Water in the West
• Ted Johnson, Chief Hydrogeologist at the Water Replenishment District of Southern California

Daniel Wendell will discuss common characteristics of successful groundwater management agencies. Rebecca Nelson will talk about innovative collaborative and management tools used in groundwater management plans in California and their potential use under the SGMA. Ted Johnson will use his agency as a case study to discuss groundwater management problems, tools and ongoing challenges, as well as the role the anticipated role that conjunctive use will play under the SGMA.

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch
13:30 – 15:00  Session 3: The value of sustainable groundwater management

This panel focuses on the funding issues related to sustainable groundwater management in both urban and agricultural areas and the potential role of market-based approaches in facilitating sustainable management.

Moderator: Sandi Matsumoto, Associate Director, Integrated Water Management at The Nature Conservancy

- Ellen Hanak, Senior Fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California
- Michael Wehner, Assistant General Manager at the Orange County Water District
- Mary Bannister, General Manager at the Pajaro Valley Water Management Agency

Ellen Hanak will present on the challenges and benefits of sustainable groundwater management, the implications of the new statute for groundwater management and the potential role of markets and market-based approaches in facilitating sustainable management in the least-cost manner. Michael Wehner will talk about Orange County Water District (OCWD) as a case study of a mature, urban, well-funded entity, focusing on what’s working, the key drivers of OCWD action and funding, lessons learned for other districts, and how OCWD is continuing to evolve. Mary Bannister will talk about the challenges and opportunities to sustainable groundwater management in a more rural area with limited funding. Mr. Wehner and Ms. Bannister will both touch on markets & market-based approaches in their jurisdictions.

15:00 – 15:30  Break

15:30 – 17:15  Session 4: Technical/data considerations for sustainable groundwater management

This panel will focus on technical and data requirements for good groundwater management, the role that advancing technologies can play in data collection, and the importance and defensibility of data in legal proceedings.

Moderator: Tim Parker, Principal at Parker Groundwater Management

- Daniel McManus, Regional Planning Branch Chief at the Department of Water Resources
- Terry Foreman, Director at the Camrosa Water District
- Rosemary Knight, Earth Sciences Professor at Stanford University
- Scott Slater, Shareholder at Brownstein Hyatt Farber Schreck

Daniel McManus will talk about the technical expectations and best management practices for groundwater sustainability plans from DWR’s perspective. Terry Foreman will talk about data considerations, political versus physical boundaries, and the data requirements for groundwater management decisions in contentious settings. Prof. Rosemary Knight will give an overview of new and emerging geophysical methods for groundwater management and the role these technologies can play in data collection under the new statute. Our final panelist, Scott Slater will talk about the role of property rights in groundwater allocation decisions, as well as the importance and defensibility of data in legal proceedings.
Day 2 – January 28: Developing a Research Agenda

Location: Graduate School of Business, Bass Center, Seawell Family Boardroom, 4th Floor, 645 Knight Way, Stanford

8:10 Shuttle Pick Up at the Sheraton Hotel

8:30 – 9:00 Breakfast and Coffee

9:00 – 10:45 Session 5: The importance of integrated groundwater management

*Our final panel will focus on integrated groundwater management and the role that collaborative processes will play in balancing stakeholder interests during the development of groundwater sustainability agencies (GSA) and groundwater sustainability plans (GSP), as well as in coordinating GSPs with other agencies.*

Moderator: William Mills, Private Consultant

- Daniel Wendell, Senior Groundwater Scientist at The Nature Conservancy
- Jack Rice, Associate Counsel at the California Farm Bureau
- Jeff Loux, Director at the Land Use and Natural Resource Program, UC Davis
- Jay Jasperse, Chief Engineer at the Sonoma County Water Agency

**Daniel Wendell** and **Jack Rice** will discuss the role of special interests and farm groups in the development of GSAs and GSPs. They will talk about how they view their role in the process, ways they could best be integrated into conversations and the ways that their involvement will improve GSP outcomes. **Jeff Loux** will talk about the benefits and challenges of collaboration under the new statute. His presentation will describe some of the tools used to foster collaborative processes, emphasizing the gains that negotiated processes afford. **Jay Jasperse** will talk about some of the challenges and opportunities Sonoma Valley Water Agency is facing under the new statute, focusing on coordination between agencies and the need for improved data sharing and collaboration.

10:45 – 11:00 Break

11:00 – 12:00 Developing a Research Agenda

- Tara Moran, Sustainable Groundwater Program Lead at Stanford University’s Water in the West
- Brian Stranko, Water Program Director at The Nature Conservancy

12:00 – 12:30 Meeting Wrap Up

- Leon Szeptycki, Executive Director at Stanford University’s Water in the West
- Maurice Hall, Science and Engineering Lead at The Nature Conservancy

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch