

## Governor Requires Local GSAs to Verify Well Permits

In response to the extreme and expanding drought conditions, Governor Newsome signed an Executive Order on March 28, that, among other things, addressed the ability of counties to permit wells. The Executive Order states that a county, city, or other public agency shall not approve a permit for a new groundwater well or for alteration of an existing well without first obtaining written verification from a Groundwater Sustainability Agency managing the area of the basin where the well is proposed to be located. This does not apply for permits for wells that will provide less than two acre-feet per year groundwater for individual domestic users, or that will exclusively provide groundwater to public water supply systems. Prior to the permitting, the GSA must verify that the groundwater extraction by the proposed well would not be inconsistent with any sustainable groundwater management program or decrease the likelihood of achieving a sustainability goal established in the GSA's Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

The County must also determine that extraction of groundwater from the proposed well is (1) not likely to interfere with the production and functioning of existing nearby wells, and (2) not likely to cause subsidence that would adversely impact or damage nearby infrastructure.

At the April 27 meeting, the NFKGSA Board approved a compliance form developed by Fresno County to be used throughout the GSA in both Fresno and Kings counties. The form must be completed, signed, and submitted for each well permit application subject to the Executive Order. New or altered well permits cannot be approved by the County without this form. Contact your County permitting staff to obtain an application. Anticipate that obtaining a permit for well construction will take longer than it has in the past. Wells are a vital part of operations, please maintain your existing well(s) to ensure its operational longevity.

For more information on how you can obtain the form, you can contact James Reynolds at (559) 237-5567 extension 108 or [jreynolds@krcd.org](mailto:jreynolds@krcd.org).

## NFKGSA Landowners Will Be Asked to Register Wells

The NFKGSA Board is currently developing a well registration program with a target implementation date of summer 2022. The NFKGSA Board adopted Rules and Regulations on December 16, 2020 to provide important data and allow for better groundwater management. These regulations are necessary to implement solutions that will provide a groundwater supply buffer for landowners to use during dryer years like the one we are in right now. Registration of wells is one of the rules included in the Rules and Regulations. The GSA will be rolling out how this will be done in the near future. For more information, the Rules and Regulations can be found online at <http://northforkkings.org/policies>.

## Kings Subbasin Works on Groundwater Sustainability Plan Revisions

On January 28 of this year, the Kings Subbasin was notified by the State that the collective Groundwater Sustainability Plans (Plan) of the seven Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) was incomplete. The Department of Water Resources (DWR) informed the Kings Subbasin Coordination consultant Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group that the Subbasin's Plan did not satisfy the objectives of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) nor substantially comply with the GSP Regulations. The Subbasin GSAs, which includes the North Fork Kings GSA, have 180 days to address the identified deficiencies and must resubmit the Plan to the Department for evaluation no later than July 27, 2022.

The DWR identified several deficiencies that prevented approval of the Plan. The deficiencies covered the areas of how lowering of groundwater levels are to be handled; how land subsidence will be identified and handled; the identification of interconnected surface water systems; and sustainable management criteria for possible water quality issues.

The North Fork Kings GSA is working on coordination with the other six GSAs in the Kings Subbasin to make the necessary corrections to the deficiencies identified by the State. Once the GSAs resubmit their respective GSPs, DWR will review the revised Plans and evaluate whether the deficiencies were sufficiently addressed. Should the GSAs fail to take sufficient actions to correct the deficiencies identified by the DWR, the Plans will not be approved. If this happens, the State Water Resources Control Board has the authority to intervene and take over management of the Subbasin.

### Kings Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plans

Central Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

James Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

Kings River East Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

McMullin Area Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

North Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

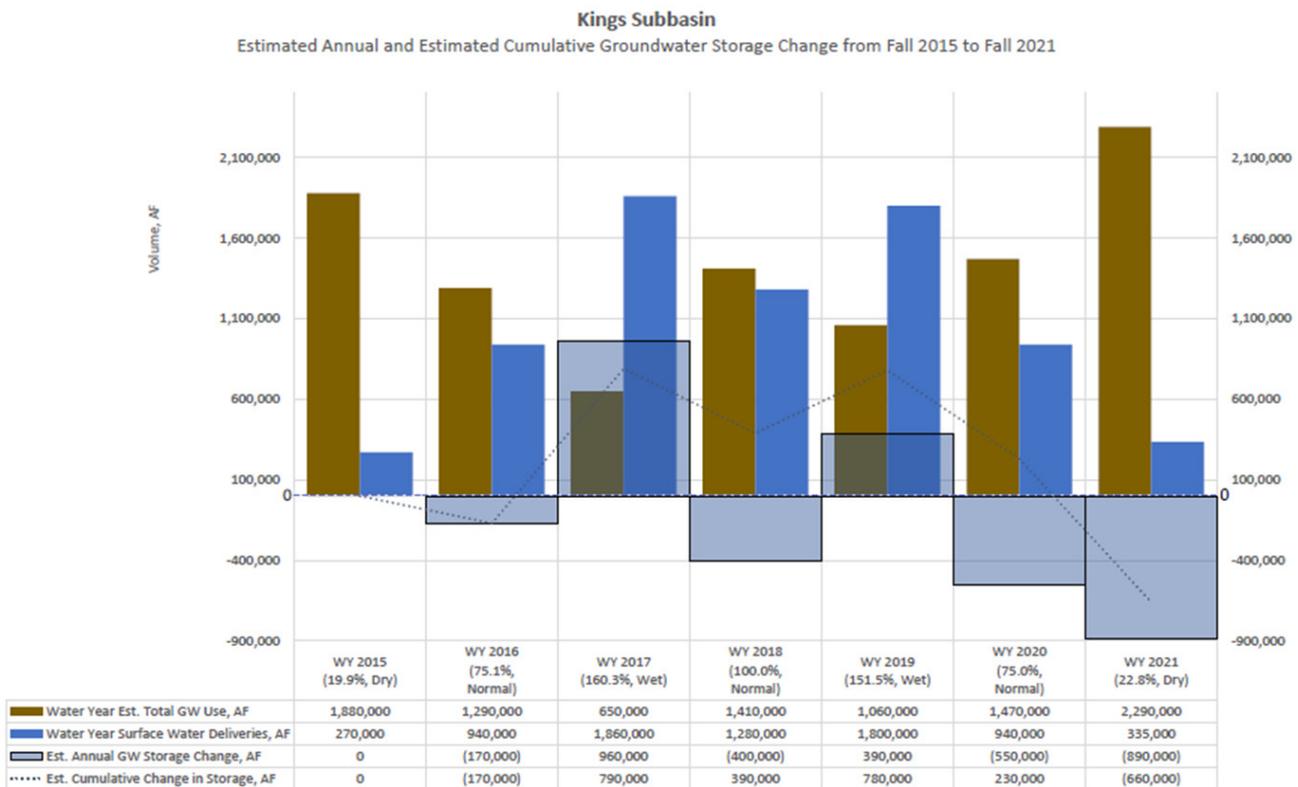
North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

South Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency GSP

# Current Groundwater Conditions in the Kings Subbasin

The North Fork Kings GSA, together with the six other Groundwater Sustainability Agencies in the Kings Subbasin, submitted the State required Annual Report to the Department of Water Resources by the April 1 deadline. The Annual Report included an overview of groundwater conditions in the region including groundwater extraction, the surface water supply available for groundwater recharge, total water use, change in groundwater storage, and a description of progress made toward implementing the Groundwater Sustainability Plan.

The Kings Subbasin saw additional reduction in groundwater storage from 2020 to 2021 due to continued dry conditions. The graph below shows the estimated groundwater storage change for the last seven years. For year 2021, there was a reduction of storage of approximately 890,000 acre feet (an acre foot equals 326,000 gallons). Although the graph does show recovery of groundwater storage during wet years, there continues to be a downward trend over the last seven years with an estimated reduction of groundwater storage of approximately 660,000 acre feet.



As implementation of SGMA moves forward, the North Fork Kings GSA is taking the opportunity to develop and execute the best strategy to achieve sustainability and secure water supplies for its landowners and stakeholders. Projects that will help provide a groundwater supply buffer for landowners to use during the dryer years include:

## Riverdale Irrigation District Recharge Project

Riverdale Irrigation District has secured the property with the intent to build a 30-acre recharge pond within their district. The project is in a good location to benefit many water users, including the towns of Lanare and Riverdale, as well many water users groundwater levels. Presently, there are surface water canals in close proximity to the proposed facility. The next phase will be planning and building the necessary water delivery system for operation.

## Laton North Recharge Project

The purpose of this project is to utilize excess surface water for groundwater recharge by diverting water from Cole Slough, a distributary of the Kings River, into a groundwater recharge basin during wet years. The proposed project will involve the construction of a 150-acre groundwater recharge basin, and a canal and pipeline system to deliver the water from the river. The project would utilize gravitational flows and would not require electricity to operate. All surface waters for the project will be supplied by Laguna Irrigation District in the form of its Pre-1914 water supply during flood events.

NFKGSA will continue to implement innovative projects that will lead to a reliable supply of groundwater for the region while working to keep groundwater management local.