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Sept. 18, 2023

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## Three Sonoma County groundwater sustainability agencies awarded \$15 million in state grant funds

**Santa Rosa, CA** – The California Department of Water Resources announced on Sept. 12, 2023, that it will award grant funds to Sonoma County’s three groundwater sustainability agencies serving Petaluma Valley, Santa Rosa Plain and Sonoma Valley. The three basins will receive \$15.1 million in funding, out of the \$187 million that DWR awarded to [32 groundwater subbasins](#) through its [Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program](#). These efforts will help support local sustainable groundwater management, including projects to help rural residents use water more efficiently and better understand how groundwater pumping impacts local creeks and streams.

The funds will help carry out a portion of the work outlined in each basin’s Groundwater Sustainability Plan, which were approved by the Department of Water Resources earlier this year. These plans include an assessment of available groundwater under current conditions and a detailed 20-year plan to ensure that groundwater is available to meet foreseeable needs for the following 50 years.

The effects of climate change and prolonged drought have resulted in depleted groundwater across the state. The Groundwater Sustainability Plan includes work to fill data gaps so groundwater sustainability agencies can more accurately know how much water is stored underground and do more to recharge groundwater when it rains.

“In Sonoma Valley, we need this funding to ensure our farms, homes and businesses can depend on groundwater resources today and in future years and help us build our resilience to drought, and I would like to thank the Department of Water Resources for reconsidering their earlier recommendations and funding this high priority basin.” said Sonoma County Supervisor and Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency Chairperson Susan Gorin.

This is the second round of Sustainable Groundwater Management Grant Program funding for the three Sonoma County groundwater sustainability agencies, having each received \$2 million to develop their groundwater sustainability plans. With this new implementation funding, the Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency will receive \$6.7 million, the Santa Rosa Plain Groundwater Sustainability Agency \$5.3 million and the Sonoma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency will be awarded \$3.1 million for aquifer system assessments, water use efficiency programs, outreach and stakeholder engagement programs and more. The plan includes partnering with local organizations such as the Community Alliance with Family Farmers, Sonoma Land Trust, Resource Conservation District and La Luz Center to engage the community.

“This is significant funding to help us meet the timeline and goals of our plan and will offset the ongoing costs to our community for this work.” said Sonoma County Supervisor and Sonoma Water Director David Rabbitt, who is also chairman of the Petaluma Valley Groundwater Sustainability Agency.



“This work will benefit our community as a whole,” said City of Cotati Mayor and Santa Rosa Groundwater Sustainability Agency Chair Susan Harvey. “These grants will help us not just protect our groundwater but also work together across the three basins to provide outreach and education for groundwater users across Sonoma County.”

The GSAs are funded by fees paid by groundwater users, grants and support from local governments, including the County of Sonoma and the Sonoma County Water Agency.

For more information about Sonoma County’s Groundwater Sustainability Agencies, see [sonomacountygroundwater.org](http://sonomacountygroundwater.org) and [subscribe](#) to our Groundwater Sustainability Agency Newsletter, published quarterly in both English and in Spanish at each of our GSA websites: [petalumavalleygroundwater.org](http://petalumavalleygroundwater.org), [santarosaplaingroundwater.org](http://santarosaplaingroundwater.org) and [sonomavalleygroundwater.org](http://sonomavalleygroundwater.org).