



South Fork Kings
Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Landowner Vote on Continuation of 2018 Assessment

Why is the South Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (SFKGSA or Agency) proposing another assessment?

Assessments paid by landowners are the only revenue source for the Agency. Revenues are used to comply with the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA), an unfunded State mandate. SFKGSA's activities include developing and updating its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP). Implementation of this plan includes, in part, the following:

- Managing and reporting groundwater sustainable (safe) yield,
- Reducing subsidence associated with declining groundwater levels,
- Mitigation of domestic wells that have gone dry from over pumping, and
- Collaborating with the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program (ILRP), and the Water Quality Coalition, to protect and improve water quality.

According to SGMA, the SFKGSA must obtain sustainability for these reportable parameters by 2040. Currently, there is no assessment in place and SFKGSA does not have a stable revenue source to fund SGMA compliance. On June 30, 2023, the prior assessment of \$9.80/acre expired and could no longer be charged.

SFKGSA listened to the concerns of landowners.

The Agency reviewed its costs and options for raising funds. SFKGSA asks landowners to approve a continued assessment of \$9.80/acre that will sunset July 1, 2028. The proposed assessment will cover the costs of administration, operations, and updates to the GSP. These activities benefit all landowners even if you do not have a groundwater well. The SFKGSA General Manager Mr. Stiglich admonishes, "If you live in Kings County all your drinking water comes from groundwater wells. Even if you do not have a well on your property, groundwater is being pumped somewhere to supply your domestic water needs and therefore we are all in this together". In addition to maintaining the groundwater at a sustainable operating level, SGMA requires the monitoring of water quality in rural domestic wells.

TIMELINE

2014 - The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) is signed into law

2017 - The South Fork Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency is formed to comply with SGMA.

2018 - Landowners approve a \$9.80/acre assessment to be collected annually for five years

2020 - SFKGSA submits its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) to the State

2022 - SFKGSA submits an addendum to the GSP

July 2023 - the \$9.80/acre assessment sunsets and is no longer charged. Landowners vote down a proposed new assessment of \$20/acre in perpetuity.


August 2023 - SFKGSA reviews its operating costs and expenses to prepare a GSP update. The Agency develops an updated Assessment Engineer's Report.

September 2023 - SFKGSA initiates a new assessment election and asks landowners to consider approving a \$10.10/acre assessment. Landowners vote down the proposed assessment.

February 2024 - SFKGSA proposes a continued assessment of \$9.80/acre through July 1, 2028.

Kings County is a major agricultural producer in the South San Joaquin valley. Because of this economic activity, groundwater may become contaminated with certain agricultural byproducts such as nitrates. SGMA requires additional monitoring for nitrates and other water quality constituents to ensure that drinking water from rural domestic wells remains pure and free from contamination. As groundwater levels fluctuate seasonally and during droughts, rural domestic wells may go dry. SFKGSA is responsible for ensuring that your household well does not go dry by regulating groundwater extraction from agricultural wells. SGMA mandates that groundwater managers mitigate these undesirable conditions including degraded drinking water quality. These mitigation measures will be paid for from a separate assessment (funded by a pumping fee) only on the agricultural wells.

The Agency's Board of Directors strives to meet the requirements of SGMA at an affordable cost for the landowners. SFKGSA is working to conduct revisions to its GSP and will attend a hearing in April 2024 with the State of California Department of Water Resources Control Board to address issues. It is critical that the Agency demonstrate to regulators that it is working towards sustainability and has the funds available to meet the goals of SGMA. Absent a new assessment, SFKGSA will be unable to fund local implementation of SGMA and the State may intervene. The State Water Resources Control Board would impose a fee structure on groundwater pumpers many times more costly than the assessment proposed by the SKFGSA. For more information visit <https://southforkkings.org/>



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Reminder: Prop 218 Assessment Ballots must be received by February 29th

NAME
ADDRESS Line 1
City, State ZIP

Information begins on the other side

Public Outreach and Participation

Provided below are upcoming public outreach meetings. All meetings will be held at 5:30pm at the Lemoore Council Chambers 429 C Street, Lemoore, CA 93245.

February 1: The Agency will conduct a landowner outreach workshop to present the proposed assessment, provide SGMA updates, hear concerns, and answer questions.

February 29 (leap year): the Agency will conduct a public hearing to tally the assessment ballots.

If you have questions or would like to submit written comments, please contact Paul Stiglich, General Manager, at (559) 423-5875 or paul@southforkkings.org.