

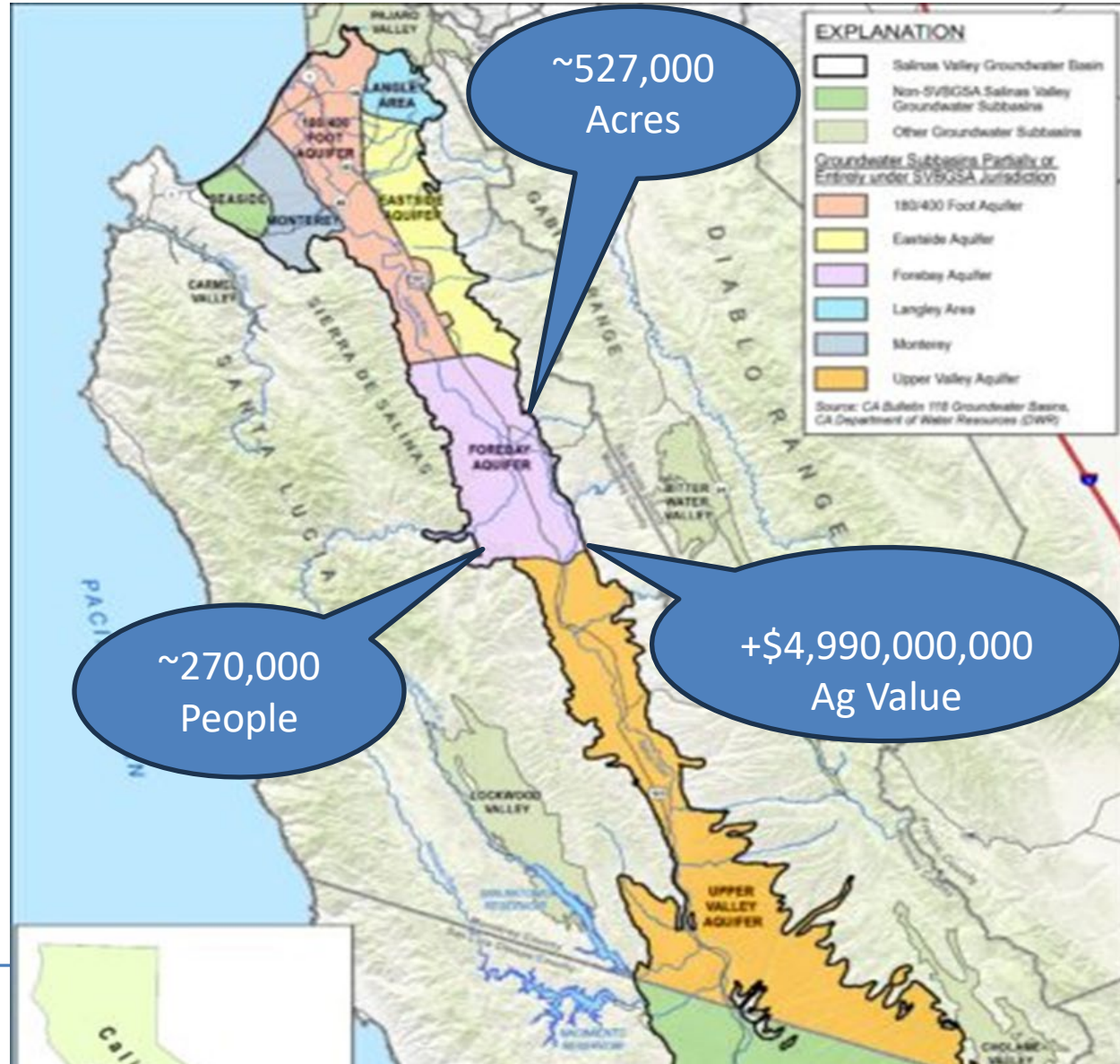


# Today's Discussion At A Glance

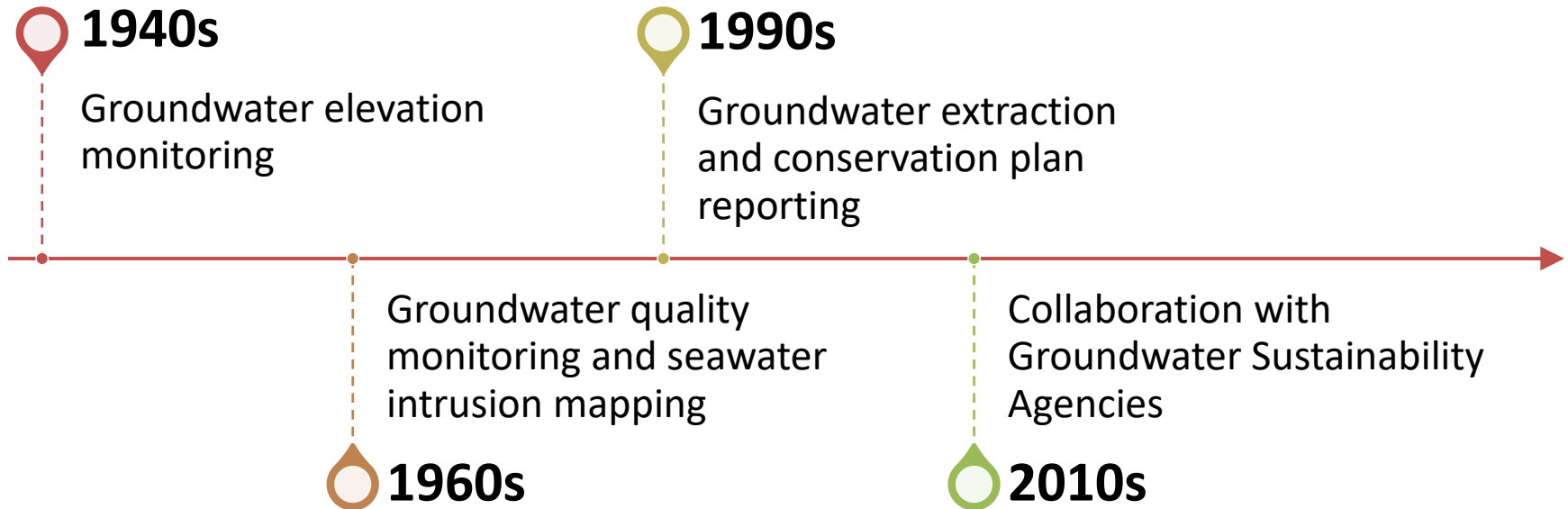
- Overview of Groundwater Monitoring Program
  - The Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin
  - The Agency's groundwater monitoring history
  - SGMA and the new regulatory paradigm
- Presentation of Proposed GMP Regulatory Fees
  - GMP Specific Services
  - Benefits of the GMP
  - Cost allocation
- Recommendation

# Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin

The Monterey County portion extends through the Salinas Valley from the San Luis Obispo County line at the south to the Pacific Ocean at the north.



# The Agency's Groundwater Monitoring History

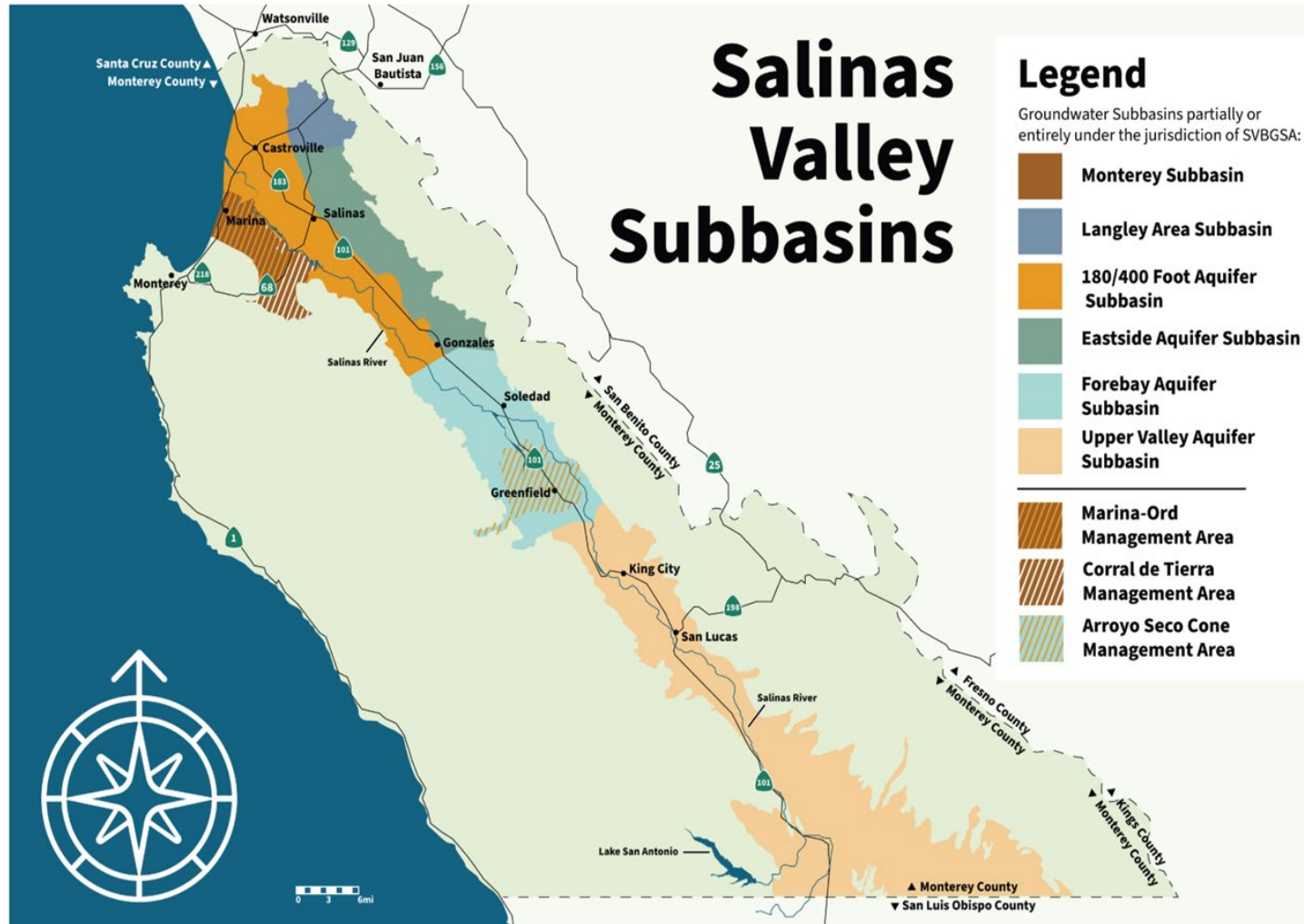


# New Regulatory Paradigm – Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

- SGMA is comprised of 3 state laws enacted in 2014.
- SGMA mandates:
  - Groundwater sustainability by 2040 or 2042;
  - The Department of Water Resources:
    - Establish and prioritize groundwater basins;
    - Approve plans and monitor progress;
    - Determine sustainability.
  - Establish local Groundwater Sustainability Agency’s in lieu of state control;
  - Development of Groundwater Sustainability Plans;
  - ***Monitoring groundwater level, quality, and usage.***

# Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency

Established in 2017 under California's Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, the Salinas Valley Basin Groundwater Sustainability Agency is tasked with the ambitious goal of developing a comprehensive groundwater sustainability plan by 2020 and implementing the plan to achieve basin sustainability by 2040.



# SVBGSA Needs

- All GSAs are dependent upon reliable and timely groundwater monitoring and data management to inform GSP implementation and assess efficacy.
- DWR requires 5-year evaluations of the SVB's GSPs – due in January 2025 for its critically over drafted priority basin and January 2027 for its high and medium priority basins.
- The SVB must also address DWR's "Recommended Corrective Actions" requiring additional well data to resolve data gaps and more timely and rigorous reporting requirements.
- In 2023, the SVB and Water Resources Agency began meeting with stakeholders to determine the best path forward to meet these needs.

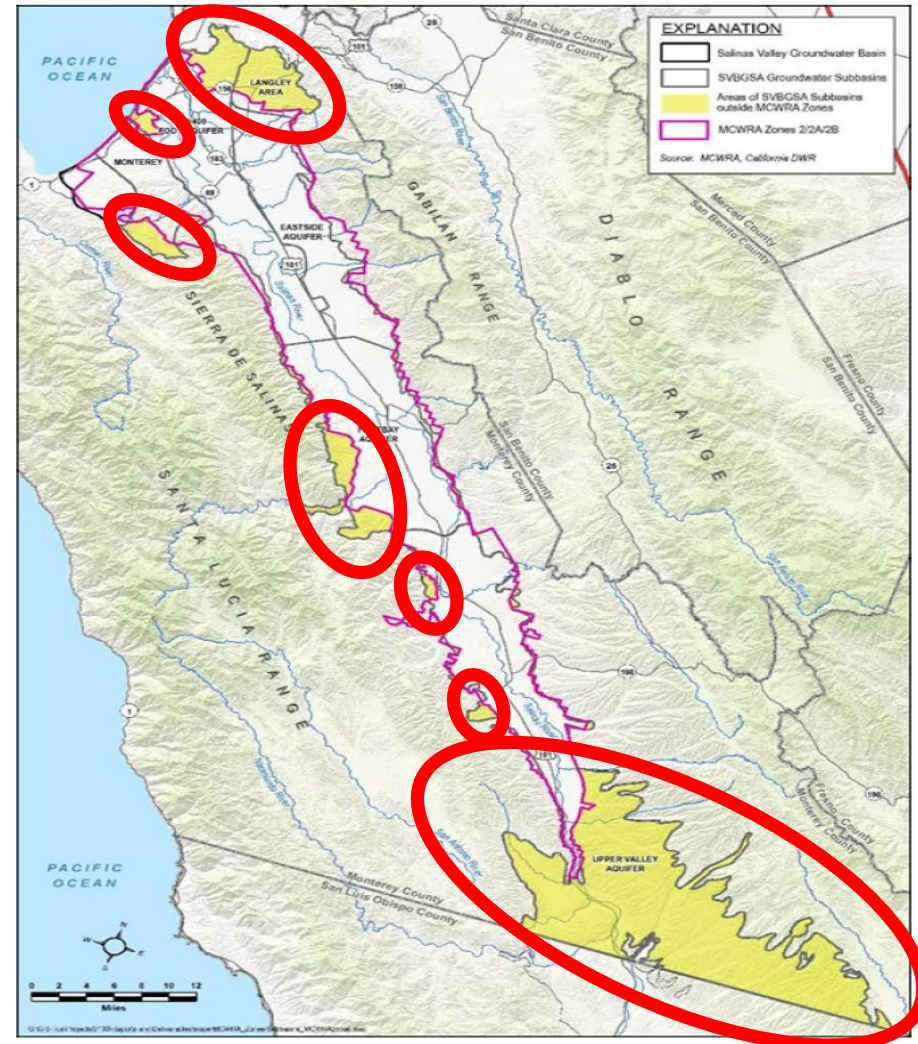
# Options Considered, Path Set

3 alternatives considered to address data gaps:

- The SVB develops a “GMP like” program to address the areas currently not reporting;
- The Agency transfers its historical monitoring activities to the SVB for all future administration, or;
- ✓ The Agency expands its historical monitoring activities to include the new areas currently not reporting.

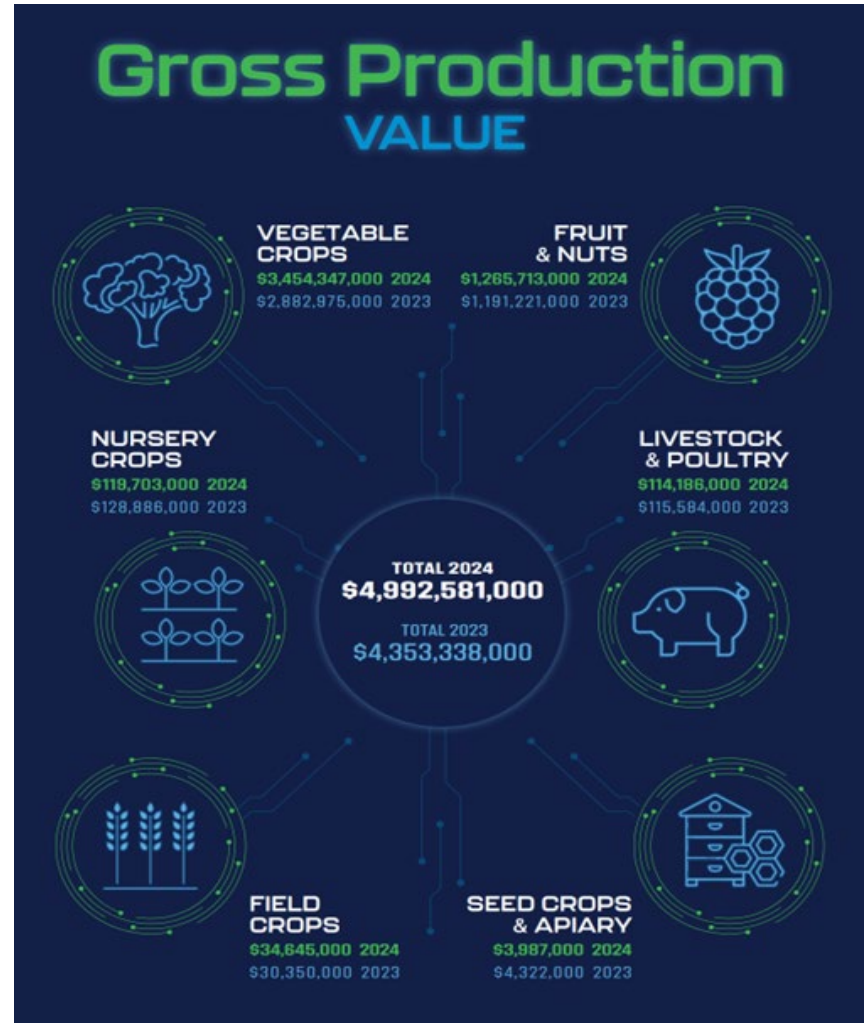
October 1, 2024, the Agency’s Board of Supervisors approved Ordinance No. 5426 and the proposal to establish a well fee and expand the Agency’s work.

Areas of groundwater extraction data gaps for the SVBGSA



# Our Communities, Economy, Culture are Groundwater Dependent

- Agricultural production and associated jobs (\$4.99B)
- Tourism and related industries (\$1.8B)
- Approximately 40% of the County workforce is associated with agriculture
- Domestic, municipal, and agricultural water supplies rely almost entirely on groundwater

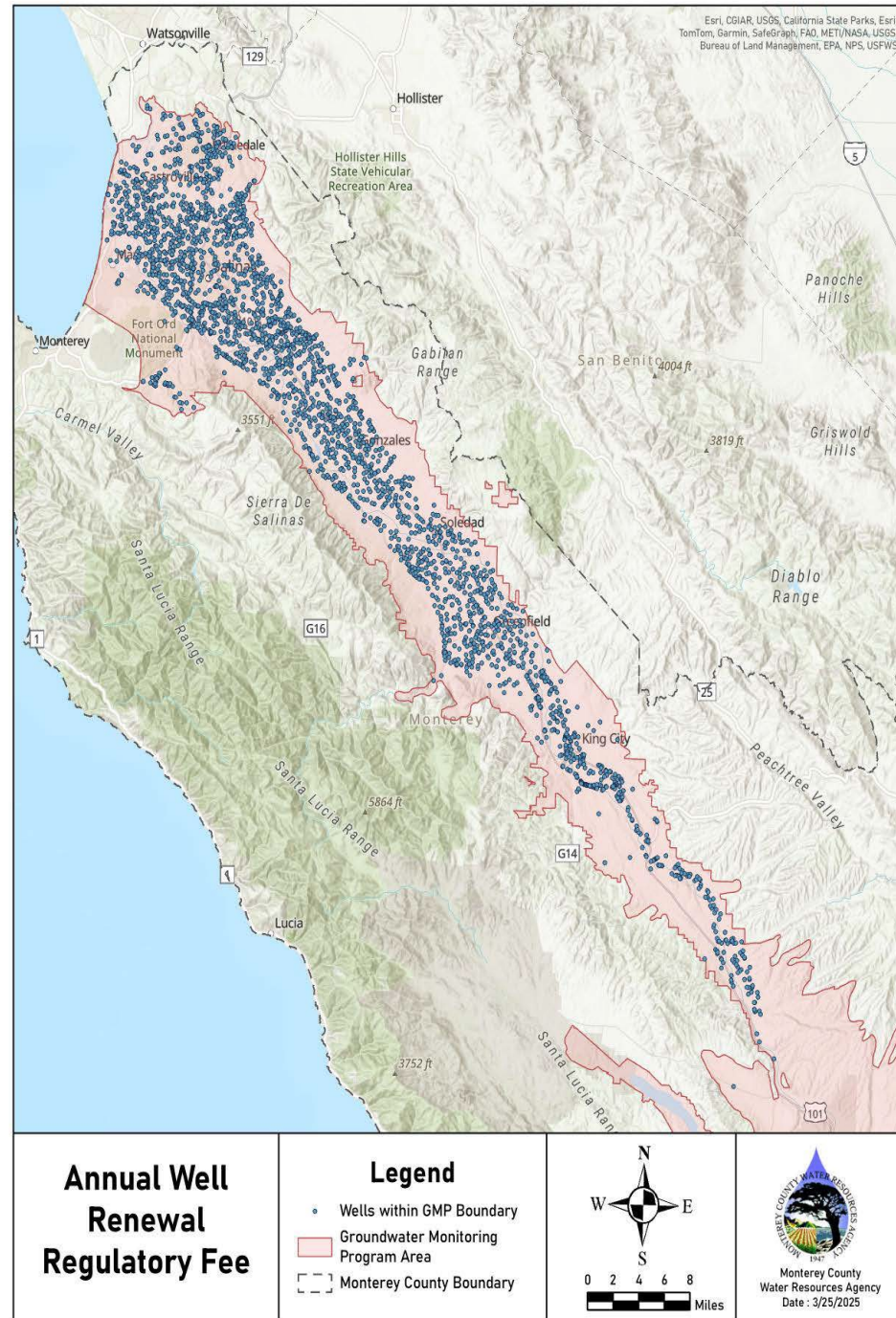


# GMP Specific Services

- MCWRA authority to monitor groundwater and set fees under the Agency Act and Ordinance No. 5426
- The GMP provides 5 specific services:
  - Initial Well Registration (one-time)
  - Annual registration renewal (annual)
  - Groundwater extraction reporting (annual)
  - Groundwater level monitoring (annual)
  - Groundwater quality monitoring (annual)
- Proposed fees for specific, GSP services will be administered on a subbasin, per-well basis.

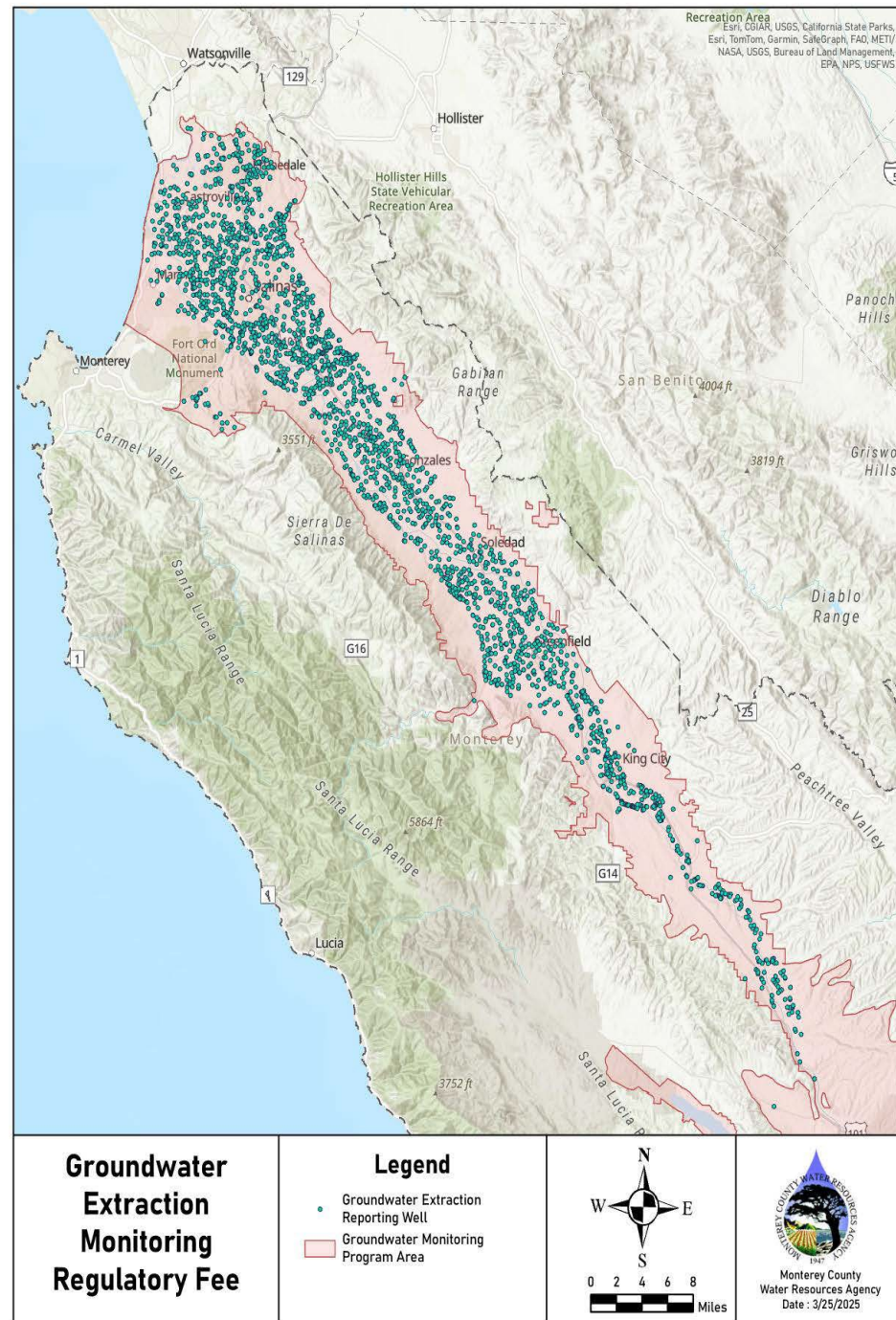
# Annual Renewal Fee

- Purpose: To annually review and verify well registration data, including changes in ownership
- Fee is \$21.90 per well (paid annually) and recovers the costs of:
  - Staff time for data verification
  - IT support and software licensing
  - Printing of notifications and billing
- Estimated to be billed to 3,500 wells per year
  - Applies to water production wells within the jurisdictional area of the SVBGSA



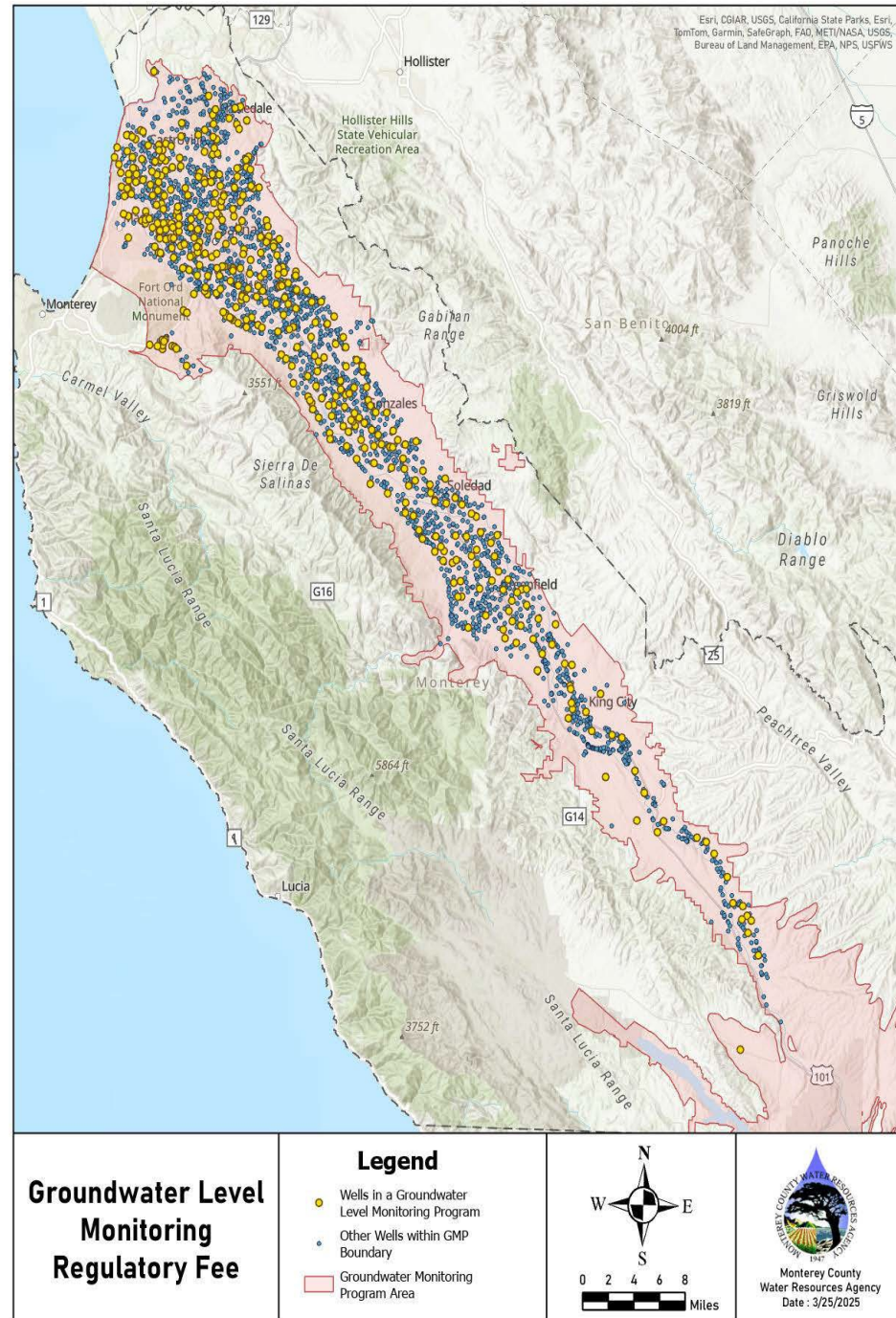
# Groundwater Extraction Reporting

- Purpose: all wells extracting more than 2 acre-feet/year must maintain an Agency-approved monitoring device and report monthly extraction data
- Fee is \$64.82 per well (paid annually) and recovers the costs of:
  - Staff time for data verification and auditing
  - IT support and online reporting application
  - Printing of notifications and billing
- Estimated to be billed to 2,100 wells per year

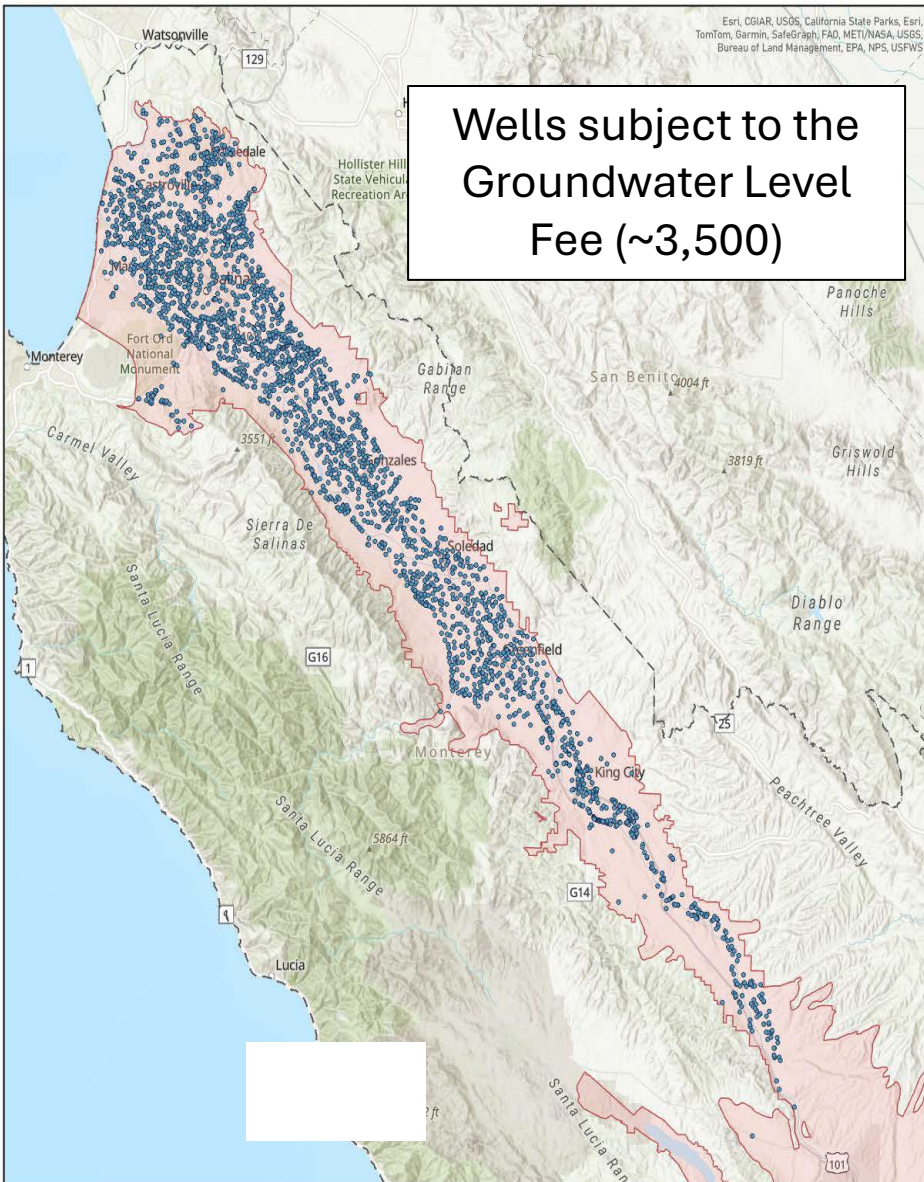


# Groundwater Level Monitoring

- Purpose: measurement of groundwater levels to quantify impacts to the groundwater basin from well extraction and climatological events, and to protect de minimis well owners
- Fee is \$117.63 per well (paid annually) and recovers the costs of:
  - Staff time for field visits, data collection, analysis and reporting
  - Vehicles, equipment, and supplies
  - Monitoring well maintenance
- Estimated to be billed to 3,500 wells per year



# Wells subject to the Groundwater Level Fee (~3,500)

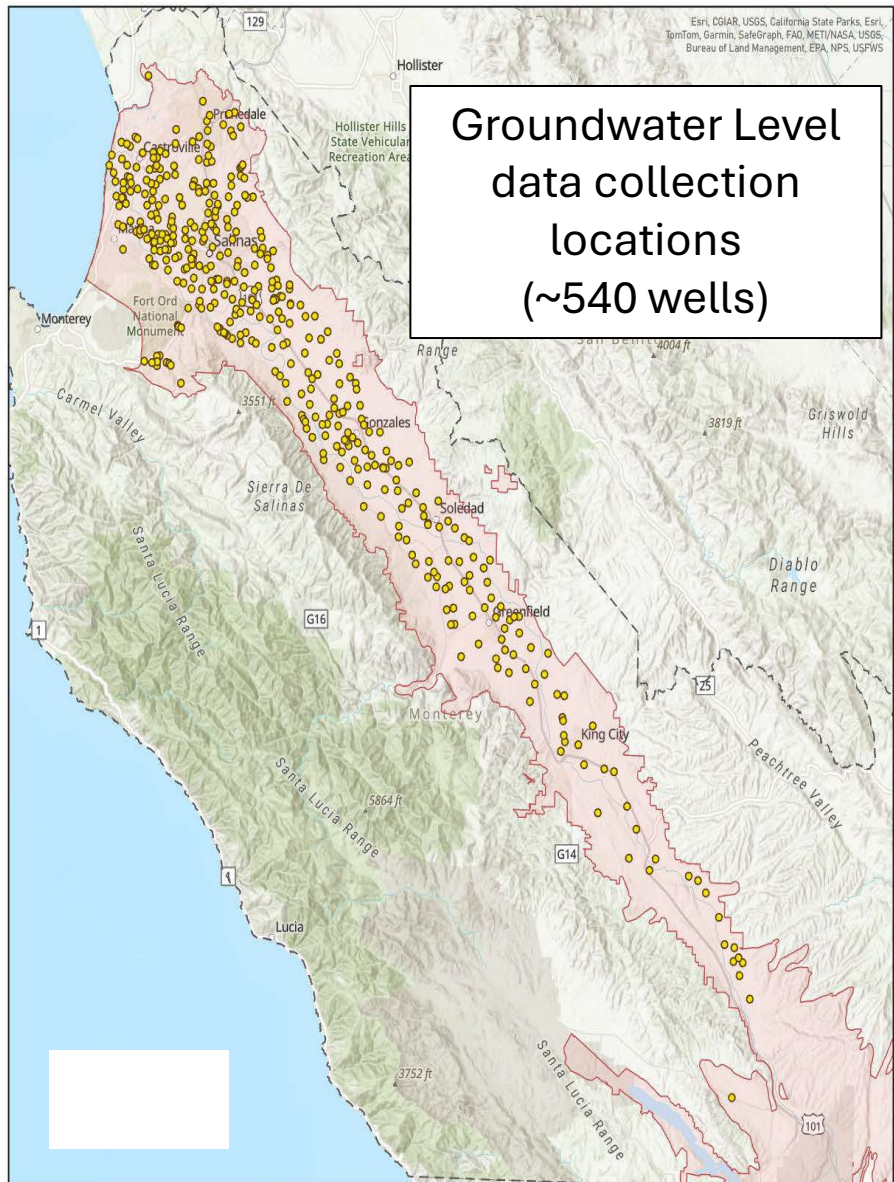


## Annual Well Renewal Regulatory Fee

- Legend**
- Wells within GMP Boundary
  - Groundwater Monitoring Program Area
  - Monterey County Boundary

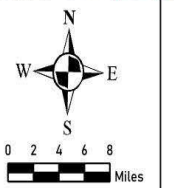


# Groundwater Level data collection locations (~540 wells)



## Groundwater Level Monitoring Regulatory Fee

- Legend**
- Wells in a Groundwater Level Monitoring Program
  - Groundwater Monitoring Program Area





# Differences in Water Quality Monitoring

- The Environmental Health Bureau:
  - Responsible for the Drinking Water Protection Services (DWPS) program
  - Regulates domestic water systems serving 2-199 connections
  - Monitors over 1,250 domestic water systems throughout the County
  - Program costs recovered on a per-well basis, annually.
- The Central Coast Water Quality Preservation, Inc.:
  - Responsible for Cooperative Monitoring Program supporting compliance with the state and federal Clean Water Acts
  - Administers waste discharge requirements for irrigated lands within the Central Coast Region
  - Program focuses on the possible contamination of irrigation drainage water, including shallow groundwater
  - Program costs recovered on a per-acre basis, annually.
- The Water Resources Agency:
  - Responsible for SGMA seawater intrusion monitoring in SVB subbasins
  - Monitoring called for under stakeholder formulated GSPs
  - Program focuses on chlorides indicative of seawater intrusion progress
  - Proposed program costs recovered on a per-well basis, annually.

# Summary of FY 25-26 GMP Reg. Fees

GMP Regulatory Fee per Category *	FY 25-26 Fee
Initial Well Registration (one-time)	\$ 160.19
Annual Well Registration Renewal	\$ 21.90
Groundwater Extraction Reporting	\$ 64.82
Groundwater Level Monitoring	\$ 117.63
Groundwater Quality Monitoring	\$ 73.90

\* Annual fees subject to change reflective of actual program costs.

# Summary of FY 25-26 GMP Reg. Fees

SV Subbasin Total Annual Fee per Well *	FY 25-26
Initial Well Registration (one-time)	\$ 160.19
Upper Valley/Forebay De Minimis Wells (R + WL)	\$ 139.53
Upper Valley/Forebay (R + WL + WR)	\$ 204.35
180/400/Eastside/Langley/Monterey De Minimis wells (R + WL + WQ)	\$ 213.43
180/400/Eastside/Langley/Monterey (R + WL + WR + WQ)	\$ 278.25
* Annual fees subject to change reflective of actual program costs.	
<b>R</b> = Annual Registration Renewal <b>WL</b> = Groundwater level monitoring <b>WQ</b> = Groundwater quality monitoring <b>WR</b> = Groundwater extraction reporting	

# Benefits of the GMP

- Quality of Life:
  - Protects future access to groundwater for all well owners, especially de minimis;
  - Alleviates the burden of individuals monitoring in compliance with the law.
- Economy of Scale:
  - Monitoring on a regional scale benefits all well owners while reducing cost;
  - Monitoring data informs management decisions, right-sizing management actions.

# Benefits of the GMP

- Avoided Costs & Preserved Property Value:
  - Quality monitoring promotes effective management, which reduces the risk of well repairs, replacement, or water treatment to maintain viable use of the groundwater;
  - Protecting and sustaining viable use of groundwater preserves private property value.
- Compliance with the Law [23 CCR § 354.32 et seq.]:
  - SGMA requires monitoring networks to reliably characterize the groundwater subbasin and to allow for evaluation of GSP implementation for all “...beneficial uses or users of groundwater.”

# GMP Cost Allocation & Recovery

- Well ownership subjects the owner to SGMA
- SGMA requires management of groundwater
- Effective management requires:
  - Well specific information – registration
  - Monitoring
    - Extraction data
    - Groundwater level & quality
- Prop 26 ties specific service – monitoring – to a specific benefit – well ownership
- The GMP cost equates to the number of wells, not the number of acres or amount of extraction

# Actions Taken in FY26 to Address De Minimis Wells

- The SVBGSA calculated the recovery of GMP cost through its rate structure, which resulted in De Minimis costs rising in some subbasins.
- The Agency has worked with the Rural County Representatives of California to draft legislation that could allow for De Minimis cost avoidance.
- The Agency has requested \$200,000 of FY27 Measure AA funds for a low-income program.
- As the baseline, the Agency is requesting approval of its proposed FY27 GMP fees.

# Today's Action

- Consider adopting a resolution to:
  - a. Approve and adopt the FY27 Groundwater Monitoring Program Regulatory Fees:
    - \$21.86 per well for Annual Well Registration Renewal,
    - \$64.82 per well for Groundwater Extraction Reporting,
    - \$117.68 per well for Groundwater Level Monitoring, and
    - \$73.92 per well for Groundwater Quality Monitoring



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