

ACWA GROUNDWATER COMMITTEE 2024-2025 WORK PLAN

Purpose:

"There shall be a Groundwater Committee whose duty it shall be to recommend policies and programs to the Board of Directors and to the State Legislative Committee and/or Federal Affairs Committee as appropriate. The committee shall consist of at least one member from each region."

-ACWA Bylaws, Article VII, Section 11

The Groundwater Committee is staffed by ACWA's State Relations Department and strives to meet at least four times per year, typically at each ACWA Spring and Fall Conference and at two meetings between conferences.

Strategic Plan:

The Groundwater Committee is guided by ACWA's 2020-2024 Strategic Plan and focuses on helping the Association implement the following policy priority:

***"Sustainable Groundwater:** Advocate for a partnership with state, federal and local agencies to increase the amount, and control the timing of, groundwater recharge to achieve successful implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). This partnership should focus on minimizing agricultural land fallowing and promote multi-benefit projects that make recharge water available to achieve sustainability under the SGMA."*

Policy Direction:

The Groundwater Committee will monitor and advocate with regard to the regulatory actions of state and federal regulatory agencies, and by mandates set forth in legislation. The Groundwater Committee will continue to lead and advocate for the effective implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

The following technical and policy documents adopted by ACWA's Board of Directors provide guidance to the Groundwater Committee on its policy priorities and positions:

- [*"ACWA Groundwater Management Policy Principles"*](#) (July 2021)
- [*"A Technical Framework for Increasing Groundwater Replenishment"*](#) (November 2019)
- [*"Recommendations for Achieving Groundwater Sustainability"*](#) (April 2014)
- [*"Sustainability from the Ground Up: A Framework for Groundwater Management in California"*](#) (April 2011)

Committee Responsibilities:

The following are the general responsibilities of the Groundwater Committee:

- Recommend policies and programs related to groundwater to the Board of Directors, the State Legislative Committee, and/or the Federal Affairs Committee.
- Monitor state and federal regulations and legislation that could affect the use and/or quality of groundwater; engage ACWA's advocacy team and advise them on technical or other issues as appropriate.
- Provide a venue to educate ACWA members on the latest advancements in science, policy, or other successful water management processes that can strengthen future groundwater management actions and knowledge.
- Develop and maintain relationships with state and federal agencies with groundwater authorities or responsibilities to provide for ongoing communication with member agencies.
- Develop policies that promote locally controlled, sustainable management of groundwater.
- Coordinate with other ACWA committees on issues directly related to groundwater.

Committee Member Responsibilities:

The following are the general responsibilities of the Groundwater Committee members:

- Committee members will have the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities including preparing comments for state or federal hearings on groundwater issues, developing programs for workshops and conferences, drafting proposed legislation, and providing input on state and federal legislation. While members are not expected to engage in every activity, they should strive to actively participate in Groundwater Committee activities, subcommittees, and work groups that will best utilize the member's skillsets.
- Committee members are expected to attend committee meetings and subcommittee meetings as necessary to contribute to the committee's work.

Committee Organization:

The Groundwater Committee is organized into the following subcommittees and work groups for the identified purposes and to advance the policy priorities of the Association. The subcommittees and work groups will include members of the Groundwater Committee and can include interested persons from other ACWA committees or persons representing the interests of member agencies. The subcommittees and work groups will meet and collaborate as needed to advance their purposes. Additional subcommittees or work groups may be formed as necessary during the 2024-25 term.

SGMA Implementation Subcommittee – Monitor and provide policy and technical input to support staff engagement and advocacy on processes related to implementation of SGMA and Flood-Managed Aquifer Recharge (Flood-MAR) with the Department of Water Resources, enforcement and permitting activities by the State Water Resources Control Board, and other strategies to increase groundwater replenishment. Facilitate opportunities for ACWA members to communicate and share lessons learned and best management practices related to

Groundwater Sustainability Plan development and implementation, including but not limited to, the following areas (mirroring the SGMA regulation sub-articles): governance, groundwater basin conditions, sustainable management criteria, monitoring networks, funding opportunities, and projects and management actions.

Legislative Subcommittee – Review groundwater legislation and offer policy recommendations to the State Legislative Committee to inform possible amendments or positions.

Groundwater Quality Subcommittee – Monitor and provide policy and technical input to support staff engagement and advocacy regarding groundwater quality issues, including constituents of emerging concern. Coordinate with ACWA’s Water Quality Committee to provide technical input and promote policies and practices related to water quality and groundwater management.

Land Use and Groundwater Management Subcommittee – Identify and develop recommendations in collaboration with land use entities to address regulatory requirements under SGMA and communicate potential land use impacts, challenges, and solutions. Coordinate with ACWA’s Agriculture Committee to promote policies and practices related to land use and groundwater management.