



Westlands Water District  
Groundwater Sustainability Agency

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Commonly Used Acronyms

MT = Minimum Threshold  
SGMA = Sustainable Groundwater  
Management Act  
GSA = Groundwater Sustainability Agency  
GSP = Groundwater Sustainability Plan  
SPA = Subsidence Prone Area

Refer to "Article 1. Regulations for the Groundwater Allocation Program and Use of Groundwater within the Westside Subbasin" found Here (<https://wwd.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/article2-clean-revised-9-19-2023.pdf>) for Glossary of Terms and Definitions, and more information.

### 1. HOW MUCH GROUNDWATER WILL BE ALLOCATED IN 2024?

Groundwater Users who submitted a 2024-25 Groundwater Allocation Application Agreement will be allocated 1.2 AF/Gross Acre (0.6 AF/ Gross Acre Sustainable Yield and 0.6 AF/ Gross Acre Transition).

### 2. HOW MUCH CARRYOVER CAN BE PUMPED IN 2024?

Your 2023-24 Groundwater Allocation can be pumped in 2024-25, but your 2023-24 Transition Allocation cannot. Your 2023-24 Transition Allocation can be pumped starting in the 2027-28 Water Contract Year.

### 3. DOES THE GROUNDWATER ALLOCATION EXPIRE?

Groundwater Allocation can be carried over for 5 years before a 10 percent loss may be imposed annually by the Board of Directors.

### 4. WHAT IS THE ORDER OF USE FOR GROUNDWATER?

Article 1.9 B defines the pumping priority as (1) Groundwater Allocation Carryover, (2) the current year's Groundwater Allocation, and (3) Groundwater Recharge Credits. A Groundwater User may request an alternative priority of use by submitting a written request to the District.

### 5. WHAT IS THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 2015 GROUNDWATER MINIMUM THRESHOLD?

SGMA requires the GSA to address undesirable results that occurred after January 1, 2015. Therefore, 2015 groundwater conditions were set as the MT to evaluate undesirable results in the Subbasin that occur after January 1, 2015. MT is a numeric value (i.e. groundwater levels) to determine when an undesirable result may occur.

### 6. WHEN CAN THE CARRYOVER TRANSITION ALLOCATION BE PUMPED?

Per Article 1.6 C (2), the earliest that Carryover Transition Allocation can be pumped is 2027, but is limited to 0.4 AF/Gross Acre of pumping.

### 7. WHO MAY PARTICIPATE ON THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE?

The Advisory Committee includes agricultural groundwater users, a Fresno County GSA representative, a domestic groundwater user, a disadvantaged community representative, and a non-government organization.

### 8. IS EVERY WELL INCLUDED IN THE MONITORING WELL NETWORK?

No. The monitoring network consists of one representative monitoring network location per thirty-three square miles in the Upper Aquifer and Lower Aquifer.

## 9. HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE THE GSA TO APPROVE A GROUNDWATER TRANSFER?

It may take the GSA up to five business days to process a groundwater transfer.

## 10. WHAT IS AQUIFER STORAGE RECOVERY?

Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) includes direct injection and temporary storage of surface water supplies into groundwater wells to replenish the aquifer. Depending on the well's condition, the well may require modifications, rehabilitation, and new equipment, such as sand media filters.

## 11. WHAT IS THE PUMPING RESTRICTION WHEN GROUNDWATER LEVELS ARE IN THE GREEN ZONE?

Green zone is defined as groundwater levels that are 50 percent or greater than the MTs for a Monitoring Well Location. Restrictions are not likely in the green zone but might be imposed if a groundwater user pumps more than 2.25 times the Groundwater Allocation in a given year.

## 12. CAN GROUNDWATER PUMPING BE RESTRICTED IN THE YELLOW ZONE EVEN THOUGH THE WATER USER PRESERVED THEIR GROUNDWATER ALLOCATION FROM PRIOR YEARS?

The GSA will review a groundwater user's account and determine if the opportunity to pump Groundwater Credit from prior years is available. If the groundwater user's account has a positive balance, then the water user should be able to pump the "recharged" Groundwater Credit, carryover and current year's Groundwater Allocation.

## 13. WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE TARGETED AREA PUMPING REDUCTION AND WHAT IS THE WATER COST OF THE TARGETED AREA PUMPING REDUCTION AND INCENTIVE PROGRAM?

The GSP's Targeted Area Pumping Reduction and Incentive Program objective is to reduce pumping in specific areas to prevent land subsidence. The GSA plans to implement this program gradually, offering incentives for surface water use (i.e. SGMA Substitute Water) in lieu of groundwater pumping. In cases of significant subsidence risk, the GSA may mandate surface water use in the SPA, with costs determined to encourage participation and reflect the full cost of groundwater pumping. The program is focused on providing a physical solution to reduce pumping in the SPA. In setting the cost of the SGMA Substitute Water the GSA may consider factors including but not limited to the quantity, quality, operational costs for physical facilities, amortized capital of the well and facilities, supply reliability and energy requirements.

## 14. HOW WILL GROUNDWATER BE ALLOCATED POST 2030?

Groundwater will be allocated uniformly based on the Sustainable Yield. Two Provisional Allocation Options will be available for selection by the Groundwater User: (1) Non-Aquifer Specific, 0.45 AF/gross acre or (2) Aquifer Specific, 0.6 AF/gross acre (0.25 AF/Gross Acre Upper Aquifer and 0.35 AF/Gross Acre Lower Aquifer). The GSA established a groundwater allocation for each gross acre of land within the Subbasin boundary. Pumping limitations are identified in the table below.

Water Level Zone	Annual Maximum Pumping	Forward Pumping Permitted	Forward Pumping Limits	Pumping Permitted when Negative Balance
Green	1.35 AF/gross acre + recharged +carryover	Yes	3 AF/gross acre (5-years' allocation)	Yes; restricted to forward pumping limits
Yellow	0.6 AF/gross acre + recharged +carryover	No	Not Available	Yes; may be charged for Replacement Water
Red	0.6 AF/gross acre + recharged + carryover	No	Not Available	No

#### 15. WHAT IS THE PENALTY FOR PUMPING MORE THAN YOU ARE ALLOCATED?

A Groundwater User who pumps more groundwater than is authorized shall be subject to a fee of a \$500/AF. In addition, the groundwater user will mitigate any excessive pumping over 25 AF/Year with Replacement Water. The District will be reimbursed by the Groundwater User for its costs, including but not limited to legal, administrative, engineering and water supply costs.

#### 16. WHAT TYPE OF GROUNDWATER CREDITS CAN AND CAN NOT BE TRANSFERRED?

Article 1.9 C (3) precludes the transfer the Transition Allocation. Groundwater Allocation and Groundwater Credits can be transferred.

#### 17. WHAT COSTS ARE ASSOCIATED WITH UTILIZING THE GROUNDWATER ALLOCATION OR RECHARGE CREDITS?

The District does not charge landowners to use their own Groundwater Allocation or Recharge Credits. The only payment the Landowner has is the SGMA Land-Based Charge at the beginning of each Contract Year.

#### 18. CAN I PUMP MY GROUNDWATER ALLOCATION, TRANSITION ALLOCATION, AND GROUNDWATER CREDITS FROM ANY WELL I OWN?

The Groundwater Allocation Program allows the groundwater user to pump any water from any of their wells as long as the well is not in the Subsidence Prone Area and was listed on their Groundwater Allocation Application.

#### 19. WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY FOR THE GROUNDWATER ALLOCATION FOR LAND I OWN BUT LEASED TO ANOTHER GROWER?

Both parties are eligible to apply for the Groundwater Allocation. If more than one Groundwater Allocation Application and Agreement for the same parcel of land is received, the Groundwater Allocation Application and Agreement submitted by the landowner shall receive the Groundwater Allocations.