

Salinas Valley Basin Problem Statement

Valleywide

- Groundwater is the primary source of water for all users in the Salinas Valley Basin.
- Supply and demand for groundwater is out of balance in parts of the valley.
- Groundwater levels over time have continued to decline.
- Future drought conditions present uncertainties from year to year, as does potential for flooding in extreme wet years.
- Existing infrastructure is aging and needs maintenance and improvements, some with significant costs.
- Potential supplemental supply projects come with significant costs and take time to implement.
- Lack of cohesive regional water management has led to unsustainable groundwater conditions that pose a serious risk to current and future economic vitality of the Salinas Valley and Monterey County.

180/400-Foot Aquifer Subbasin

- The Subbasin is defined by DWR as critically over drafted because of seawater intrusion.
- Seawater continues to move inland and the resulting brackish groundwater continues to impact wells.
 - Groundwater pumping continues within the CSIP area. These wells are at risk of increasing salinity over time.
 - MCWRA CSIP supplemental wells have been intruded and deemed no longer usable for irrigation.
 - Castroville, Salinas and Marina are disadvantaged communities with an at-risk water supply.
 - Castroville CSD water supply wells have been taken wells offline because of salinity increases.
- Groundwater elevations east of the seawater intrusion front remain below sea level and have continued to decline.
- Landward sloping groundwater levels have increased during recent periods of drought.
- Most pumping in the subbasin occurs where supplemental recycled or surface water supplies are not available, inland of the seawater intrusion front.
- Extraction from the deep aquifers occurs at a rate greater than it is replenished; inflows do not occur within a timescale for use/management.
- Currently, deep aquifers are not a long-term sustainable replacement supply for shallower aquifers that become impaired, because of the risk of seawater intrusion and additional undesirable results.