

**Mission:**

To serve and represent regional water supply interests and assist Regional Water Authority members with protecting and enhancing the reliability, availability, affordability and quality of water resources.

Member Agencies

California-American Water Company

Carmichael Water District

Citrus Heights Water District

Del Paso Manor Water District

El Dorado Irrigation District

Fair Oaks Water District

Folsom, City of

Fruitridge Vista Water Company

Lincoln, City of

Orange Vale Water Company

Placer County Water Agency

Rancho Murieta CSD

Roseville, City of

Rio Linda/Elverta CWD

Sacramento, City of

Sacramento Suburban Water District

San Juan Water District

Southern California Water Co.

RWA Associates

El Dorado County Water Agency

Sacramento Municipal Utility District

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District

SGA Adopts Groundwater Management Plan

The Sacramento Groundwater Authority (SGA) has adopted a groundwater management plan that will play a key role in protecting local groundwater resources and furthering the goals of the Water Forum Agreement.

The plan, which covers the groundwater basin in Sacramento County north of the American River, lays out five management objectives for the basin and includes several components aimed at monitoring and managing groundwater quality and levels.

“This plan provides a critical framework for managing and sustaining our local groundwater resources,” SGA Chair Ron Bachman said. “We now have an action plan with specific goals and objectives providing a road map for coordination among the 14 overlying water purveyors.”

SGA Executive Director Ed Winkler said the plan was developed to address several factors affecting the long-term health of the groundwater basin. These include declining groundwater levels due to historic pumping, threats to water quality posed by contamination plumes and the need to better manage



SGA Chair Ron Bachman signs the resolution adopting the groundwater management plan.

surface and groundwater supplies to meet the region's growing water demands while protecting the environment.

The plan also incorporates and reinforces regional objectives included in the Sacramento Water Forum Agreement, a landmark accord signed in 2000 by local water purveyors, business and agricultural leaders, environmental interests and citizens groups.

Winkler noted that the plan meets the requirements of Senate Bill 1938 of 2002, which requires public agencies to implement groundwater management

plans with specific elements as a prerequisite for receiving state funds for groundwater projects.

SGA's plan was developed with funding and technical assistance provided through partnerships with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the California Department of Water Resources. It was drafted with input from technical review and policy committees as well as the public.

The plan and further details about regional groundwater management can be accessed at <http://www.sga2o.org/sga>.

2004 RWA / SGA Leadership Elected

The RWA Board of Directors on January 8 elected a new Executive Committee and officers for 2004.

Bob Churchill, general manager of the Citrus Heights Water District, was elected chair of the Authority. Pauline Rocucci, a member of the Placer County Water Agency's Board of Directors, was elected vice chair.

Other Executive Committee members include Mitch Dion, general manager, California-American Water Company; Paul Selsky, board member, Carmichael Water District; Gary Reents, director of utilities, City of Sacramento; Rich Plecker, general manager, Fair Oaks Water District; Robert Cook, Jr., general manager, Fruitridge Vista Water Company; Rob Roscoe, general manager, Sacramento Suburban Water District; and Joseph Alessandri, board member, San Juan Water District.



Bob Churchill (left), the newly elected RWA Chair and Gary Reents, the outgoing chair.

New officers were selected for the Sacramento Groundwater Authority on December 11, 2003. Ron Bachman, a member of Sacramento Suburban Water District's Board of Directors, was re-elected chair. Mitch Dion, general manager of California-American Water Company, is the new vice chair.

RWA / SGA Web Sites Launched

RWA and SGA made their on-line debuts in November with new Internet web sites. The user-friendly sites are designed to make regional water news, programs and services even more accessible to members and their customers. For the latest on water efficiency activities, program happenings, board meetings and more, see www.rwah2o.org and www.sgah2o.org.



Regional Water Authority
BUILDING ALLIANCES IN NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

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ARBCA Completes Mission, Hands Baton to RWA

The American River Basin Cooperating Agencies (ARBCA) has formally concluded its work and handed the reins to RWA and SGA to continue implementing the regional conjunctive use program.

"I'm very pleased to report that the American River Basin Cooperating Agencies has completed its mission, and has laid the groundwork for a Regional Water Master Plan," ARBCA Chair Lyle Hoag said. "The baton has been passed to the RWA, and we are already reaping the first fruits of this regional effort in the form of a \$22 million grant."

ARBCA was formed in 1998 to develop equitable, cost-effective strategies for enhancing water supply reliability and operational flexibility for water users who rely on Folsom Lake, the lower American River and the underlying groundwater basin north of the American River. As the effort progressed, the 15 cooperating agencies — all of whom were signatories to the Water Forum Agreement — formed a partnership with RWA and SGA to coordinate development and implementation of the regional conjunctive use plan prescribed by the Water Forum Plan. All 15 of the cooperating agencies are members of RWA, and many are members of SGA as well.

The ARBCA effort officially concluded on October 22, 2003, with the completion of a final report on its Regional Water Master Plan (RWMP). The plan identifies project and program alternatives for implementing the conjunctive use program.

RWA received a \$22 million grant in 2002 to implement the American River Basin Regional Conjunctive Use Program, a \$43 million project to build and upgrade water facilities throughout the region to better manage surface and groundwater resources.

Four Long-Time Water Leaders Recognized for Achievements

RWA presented its annual Water Statesperson of the Year award in December to Dave Breninger, general manager of the Placer County Water Agency.

In addition, three individuals received the Authority's Distinguished Service Award for their career contributions to the region's water community. The recipients include Lyle Hoag, long-time board member of San Juan Water District, LaNell Little, recently retired general manager of Carmichael Water District; and Jim English, newly retired general manager of San Juan Water District.

Paul Selsky, board member of Carmichael Water District and chair of the RWA Awards Committee, said the award recipients have been instrumental in building alliances and advancing programs to improve the region's water supply reliability. "The leadership and achievements of these individuals have made a significant difference to our region," Selsky said. The awards were presented December 9 at the Authority's annual holiday social.



Dave Breninger (left) receives the 2003 Water Statesperson of the Year Award from Rich Plecker, member of RWA's Executive Committee.

Breninger, who joined Placer County Water Agency as general manager in 1992, was honored for his role in bringing new members to RWA this year and for providing leadership on several key initiatives at PCWA in 2003.

Hoag, who retired from the San Juan Water District board on December 31, was honored for his 50 years of service to the water industry. He served on RWA's Executive Committee from 2001 to 2003, and previously served as a director of the Fair Oaks Water District.

Little retired in June after 17 years with Carmichael Water District, including the past eight years as general manager.

English retired at the end of 2003 from San Juan Water District, which he guided as general manager since 1989. His water career has spanned nearly 40 years, including 28 with San Juan.

Energy Bill Derailed Over MTBE

Fight Will Continue in 2004

A national energy bill that would exempt oil companies from liability for MTBE contamination was derailed in a dramatic showdown in the Senate in November. Though stalled for now, supporters have vowed to revive the legislation early in 2004.

The bill, strongly opposed by water agencies in California and several other states, passed the House on a swift vote November 18 but met stiff resistance in the Senate, where 34 Democrats and six Republicans joined forces to block a floor vote on the measure. Supporters of the bill, HR 6, failed to get the 60 votes needed to end a filibuster organized by opponents, including California Senator Barbara Boxer.

The sweeping energy bill, which includes \$31 billion in tax incentives and a host of energy initiatives, has drawn fire from water agencies, cities and counties nationwide for its so-called "safe harbor" language for MTBE manufacturers. The language would protect makers of the controversial fuel additive from lawsuits stemming from contamination of groundwater and surface water by MTBE. The immunity would be retroactive to September 5, 2003.

If passed, the provision would block lawsuits such as one filed October 2 by Sacramento County water agencies, including SGA. That lawsuit, filed in Sacramento Superior Court, seeks damages for threats to drinking water wells caused by MTBE leaking from underground storage tanks.

Water agencies fear the immunity provision would burden local ratepayers and their water districts with the heavy cost of cleaning up contamination and replacing water supplies lost to MTBE.

Members of the Association of California Water Agencies and other water groups mounted a major effort throughout 2003 to oppose the safe harbor language.

