



MID-KINGS RIVER
GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY AGENCY

RESIDENTS | STAY INFORMED

Our Community Depends on Groundwater.

Help Keep Groundwater Decisions Close to Home.



Groundwater is a shared resource that supports our homes, farms, and businesses. It provides water for many households and helps sustain the agricultural economy that supports local jobs and businesses throughout the region.

Funding Local Groundwater Management

The Mid-Kings River GSA is proposing a two-part funding package to meet SGMA requirements and regain local control over groundwater management.

Who Is Affected?

The funding package includes two separate components: a land-based assessment and a groundwater pumping fee.

Land-based assessment: Applies to assessable acres within the Mid-Kings River GSA. Most property owners are included in the proposed assessment, with the exception of parks, schools, and cemeteries.

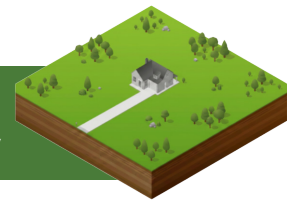
Groundwater pumping fee: This fee applies to groundwater pumpers extracting more than 2 acre-feet annually. If you are a rural resident pumping less than 2 acre-feet for household use, you are excluded from this fee. Public water systems will pay the extraction fee for the groundwater used to serve their businesses and residents.

The Mid-Kings River GSA serves:

- ✓ **Hanford**
- ✓ **Armona**
- ✓ **Home Garden**
- ✓ **Hardwick**
- ✓ **Surrounding rural and agricultural lands**

Assessment Breakdown by Property Size

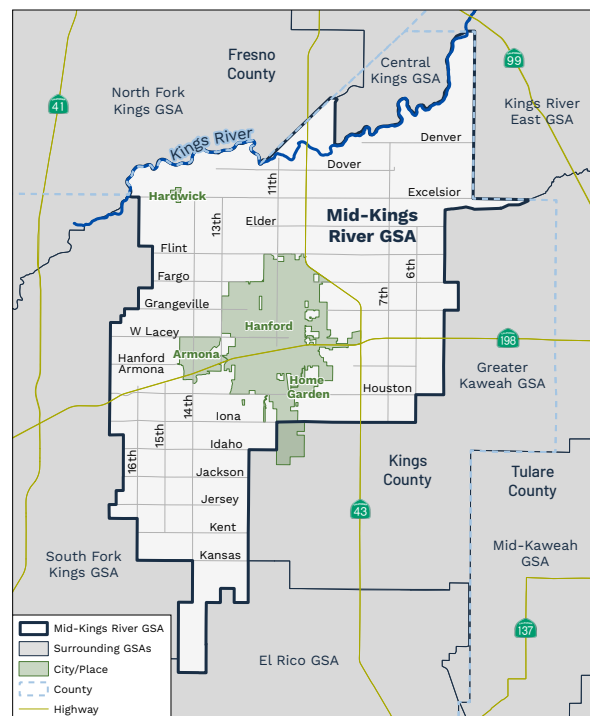
1 Acre
\$26.84 Annually



6,000 Sq. Ft.
\$3.76 Annually

Calculations are based on the **proposed maximum** assessment of \$26.84.

MANY RESIDENTIAL PARCELS WOULD PAY LESS THAN \$4 ANNUALLY TO SUPPORT LOCAL GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT.





Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why is this funding package needed?

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires local agencies to achieve groundwater sustainability by 2040. **While SGMA established this responsibility, it is an unfunded mandate that requires agencies to fund its implementation.** A reliable funding source is needed to support the planning, monitoring, reporting, and groundwater management activities necessary to achieve sustainability.

The GSA is currently reliant on financial assistance from primarily Kings County for its operations, which is not a sustainable long-term solution. Without stable funding, the GSA cannot fully implement its Groundwater Sustainability Plan or effectively plan for the future.

This need has become more immediate because the Tulare Lake Subbasin is on State probation, resulting in increased State oversight and additional fees. To move beyond probation, the State must see that the basin has the funding to implement SGMA. **Establishing a reliable funding source is a critical step toward reducing further State oversight.**

2. What am I being asked to do?

As a property owner, you are being asked to participate in the decision-making process. You can vote on the proposed land-based assessment via ballot mailed to property owners, and are invited to provide public comment on the groundwater pumping fee.

3. Why does this funding package apply to residential properties?

Groundwater is a shared resource that supports homes, businesses and agriculture throughout the region. Residential households rely on groundwater every day. The Mid-Kings River GSA was formed to comply with SGMA, which requires local agencies to manage groundwater sustainably for the long-term benefit of all groundwater users. **The proposed assessment revenue would help fund groundwater monitoring, planning, reporting, and other efforts needed to ensure groundwater is available long into the future.**

Both the proposed assessment and pumping fee are proportional to the benefit or service received. The assessment is charged on a per-acre basis, so smaller residential parcels would generally pay less than larger agricultural properties.

4. What authority does the GSA have to propose this funding package?

SGMA authorizes local agencies like the Mid-Kings River GSA to establish assessments and fees to fund groundwater sustainability activities. The GSA is committed to public transparency throughout the process of adopting new assessments and fees.

5. How do I participate in the funding package decision-making process?

Land-based assessment (Proposition 218): Property owners can participate by voting on the assessment using the ballot mailed in August. Ballots must be returned prior to the close of the Public Hearing scheduled for September 29th at 1:00 p.m.

Pumping fee (Proposition 26): Landowners may submit a public comment by mail, in person, or online. Visit midkingsrivergsa.org/localfunding or review the instructions provided in the mailed Public Notice.

6. What happens if the proposed funding package is not approved?

If the proposed funding package fails, the GSA will lack the funding required to continue managing groundwater on local stakeholders' behalf. SGMA was designed to keep groundwater management in local hands, but the State steps in if local agencies do not demonstrate sufficient progress. The Tulare Lake Subbasin is currently on State probation, meaning the State has already increased its oversight over our groundwater. **Without a stable funding source, the risk of continued State involvement in groundwater management increases.**

7. How was the budget developed?

Budget priorities, expenditures, and programs are discussed openly and are subject to public review. The 5-year annual budget included in the Engineer's Report and Cost-of-Service Study as part of this funding proposal were developed in close consultation with the Stakeholder Advisory Committee, who have gathered around the table for over a year to discuss SGMA's urgent priorities and build forward momentum for local implementation.

8. Why does the proposed assessment indicate a "maximum" rate?

If approved, the assessment establishes a maximum annual rate the Mid-Kings River GSA Board may adopt. Each year, the Board will review the agency's budget and set the rates based on funding needs, not to exceed the proposed \$26.84 per acre maximum. **The Board may adopt lower rates, but it cannot exceed the approved maximum rates without going back to the landowners for approval through a Proposition 218 election.**

9. I am a homeowner in a community or city. How does this apply to me?

If you own property within the Mid-Kings River GSA, the proposed land-based assessment applies to your property. If approved, property owners would be responsible for paying the assessment. For homes served by a community or municipal water system, the groundwater used will be subject to the groundwater pumping fee.