

Per California Code of Regulations, title 2, section 548.5, the following information will be posted to CalHR's Career Executive Assignment Action Proposals website for 30 calendar days when departments propose new CEA concepts or major revisions to existing CEA concepts. Presence of the department-submitted CEA Action Proposal information on CalHR's website does not indicate CalHR support for the proposal.

A. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Date

2018-12-13

2. Department

Department of Water Resources

3. Organizational Placement (Division/Branch/Office Name)

Executive Division

4. CEA Position Title

Deputy Director, Sustainable Groundwater Management

5. Summary of proposed position description and how it relates to the program's mission or purpose.
(2-3 sentences)

The Deputy Director for Sustainable Groundwater Management will be responsible for providing oversight and Executive-level policy guidance for the Executive Sustainable Groundwater Management Program. The Deputy Director will oversee programs and projects that provide strategic planning and oversight of the implementation of long-term sustainable groundwater management in California.

6. Reports to: (Class Title/Level)

Director, DWR / Exempt

7. Relationship with Department Director (Select one)

- Member of department's Executive Management Team, and has frequent contact with director on a wide range of department-wide issues.
- Not a member of department's Executive Management Team but has frequent contact with the Executive Management Team on policy issues.

(Explain):

8. Organizational Level (Select one)

- 1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th (mega departments only - 17,001+ allocated positions)

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST

9. What are the duties and responsibilities of the CEA position? Be specific and provide examples.

The Deputy Director for Sustainable Groundwater Management will report to the Director of the Department of Water Resources (DWR) and is will be responsible for providing oversight and Executive-level policy guidance for the Executive Sustainable Groundwater Management Program (E-SGMP).

As a member of the Executive team, the incumbent will advise the Director and other Executive staff on major policy, long-range planning, and program issues affecting water management for the State of California (State). The incumbent will also oversee programs and projects that provide strategic planning and oversight of the implementation of long-term sustainable groundwater management.

On September 16, 2014, Governor Jerry Brown signed into law a three-bill legislative package, composed of AB 1739 (Dickinson), SB 1168 (Pavley) and SB 1319 (Pavley), collectively known as the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA). For the first time in its history, California now has a framework for sustainable groundwater management. This position will direct the establishment of the SGMA framework involving basin prioritization, guidance documents, and well standards. The CEA will also ensure timely updates to Bulletin 118 (which provides a systematic evaluation of groundwater basins in California) and Bulletin 160 (which provides California Water Plan updates). Further, this position will ensure local and regional agencies receive the incentives, including financial assistance, tools, and guidance to develop, implement, and enforce sustainable groundwater management practices.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

10. How critical is the program's mission or purpose to the department's mission as a whole? Include a description of the degree to which the program is critical to the department's mission.

- Program is directly related to department's primary mission and is critical to achieving the department's goals.
- Program is indirectly related to department's primary mission.
- Program plays a supporting role in achieving department's mission (i.e., budget, personnel, other admin functions).

Description: The E-SGMP and actions to be overseen and managed by this position are essential to meeting DWR's mission of managing and protecting California's water resources, working with other agencies to benefit the State's people, and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the natural and human environments. The E-SGMP efforts are essential to protecting the State's critical water infrastructure system (including the State Water Project and the State Plan of Flood Control) from the devastating effects of subsidence caused by the over extraction of groundwater.

In addition, although the name of the legislation (SGMA) only includes the term "groundwater," all water management in the State is affected by the implementation of SGMA. SGMA is having a profound effect on virtually every water program, supplier, and user in the State, as well as the ecosystem. Further, E-SGMP looks to DWR's Strategic Plan, the California Water Action Plan, and sustainable water resources management goals of Update 2018 of the California Water Plan to progress sustainable water resources management in the State and align with other DWR programs.

B. SUMMARY OF REQUEST (continued)

11. Describe what has changed that makes this request necessary. Explain how the change justifies the current request. Be specific and provide examples.

As mentioned, in September 2014, Governor Brown signed into law a three-bill legislative package known as SGMA. SGMA requires governments and water agencies of high and medium basins to halt overdraft and bring groundwater basins into balanced levels of pumping and recharge. Under SGMA, these basins should reach sustainability within 20 years of implementing their sustainability plans. For critically overdrafted basins, that target is year 2040. For the remaining high and medium priority basins, the year 2042 is the deadline.

In Governor Brown's SGMA signing statement, he emphasized that "...groundwater management in California is best accomplished locally." SGMA empowers local agencies to form Groundwater Sustainability Agencies (GSAs) to manage basins sustainably and requires those GSAs to adopt Groundwater Sustainability Plans for crucial groundwater basins in California.

DWR was been given an instrumental role in providing not only technical assistance, but regulatory and programmatic oversight in a timely manner to local agencies to comply with SGMA. DWR's Sustainable Groundwater Management Program (SGMP) provides that ongoing support to local agencies through guidance and financial and technical assistance.

Previously, all SGMA-related activities were housed in DWR's Division of Integrated Regional Water Management Program (DIRWM). DIRWM is a long-established program that has a high number of existing programs and projects with competing priorities and commitments. Given the equally critical and time-sensitive needs of DWR's requirements under SGMA, an internal reorganization was undertaken in late 2017. To more effectively manage and implement the next phase of SGMA, in December 2017, DWR established E-SGMP and moved E-SGMP from DIRWM to the Executive Division.

E-EGMP was temporarily placed under the Deputy Director, Special Initiatives (exempt appointee), until this position is established. The Deputy Director for Sustainable Groundwater Management is needed to provide focused oversight and leadership to fulfill the numerous and highly sensitive actions needed to successfully implement SGMA. Once this position is established, the Deputy Director, Special Initiatives will continue to serve as senior advisor to the Director and provide essential leadership and coordination on a variety of sensitive and complex water policy issues and initiatives. To date, the Legislature has appropriated a significant amount of funding to E-SGMP to implement DWR's SGMA responsibilities. Establishing E-SGMP in the Executive Division and providing a Deputy Director dedicated to this program is necessary to ensure timely decision-making, financial accountability and direct access to the Executive team. Further, having a CEA for E-SGMP to oversee the program is necessary to align Department-wide groundwater efforts and minimize duplicative or incompatible efforts, as well as meet upcoming statutory deadlines and technical assistance requirements.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE

12. Provide 3-5 specific examples of policy areas over which the CEA position will be the principle policy maker. Each example should cite a policy that would have an identifiable impact. Include a description of the statewide impact of the assigned program.

As noted previously, the passage of SGMA is the first time in California's history that a package of bills created the foundation for regulating groundwater statewide. All water management in the State is affected by the implementation of SGMA and SGMA is influencing virtually every water program, supplier, and user in the State. SGMA stipulated that groundwater resources are most effectively managed at the local and/or regional level, and the State's role should be (1) to provide guidance, tools, and resources to local entities, and (2) to fill the void should the local agencies be unable or unwilling to act.

Given this, the CEA will establish the SGMA framework for E-SGMP and be the principle policy maker for (1) developing and implementing regulations, (2) basin prioritization, (3) guidance documents, (4) best management practices for regulations, (5) well standards, and (6) regulations for basin boundary revisions. In addition, policy developed by this CEA will ensure local and regional agencies receive the incentives, tools, and guidance to develop, implement, and enforce sustainable groundwater management practices statewide.

C. ROLE IN POLICY INFLUENCE (continued)

13. What is the CEA position's scope and nature of decision-making authority?

This CEA will have broad decision-making authority for water resource management with statewide impacts. Specifically, this position will have wide-ranging influence and delegated authority to represent the Director and the Administration in setting statewide groundwater management policies. The incumbent will provide policy guidance, recommend the adoption of policies, and advise Executive staff on the implications of proposed administrative actions specific to SGMA.

The Deputy Director, Sustainable Groundwater Management will also advise and assist the Director with various management matters and approve and sign documents, correspondence, and reports within their area of responsibility. Further, while the position reports to the Director, the incumbent will have frequent interaction with the California Natural Resources Agency Secretary and staff, the Governor's Office, members of the Legislature and their staff, various other State government executives, local officials, and public water agencies. The position also interfaces with federal government officials, including the United States Army Corps of Engineers, United States Bureau of Reclamation, and Congress.

14. Will the CEA position be developing and implementing new policy, or interpreting and implementing existing policy? How?

The Deputy Director for Sustainable Groundwater Management will develop and implement new policy, in addition to interpreting and implementing existing policy. In order to be successful, this position must work collaboratively with key members of the Administration, state, federal, and local entities, various stakeholders, and technical DWR staff on a variety of policy issues.