



Groundwater Allocation Frequently Asked Questions

The Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency (Greater Kaweah GSA) has instituted a groundwater allocation for Water Year 2023 to address the current downward groundwater trends and help achieve sustainability in the Greater Kaweah GSA's portion of the Kaweah Subbasin. The groundwater allocation went into effect on October 1, 2022. The Board's goal is a groundwater allocation that is equitable and flexible for all landowners.

This list of frequently asked questions provides a high-level overview to address some of the questions landowners may have. For the full details regarding the groundwater allocation, please read the [Rules & Regulations](#).

Agency staff is available to answer questions regarding the Rules and Regulations and allocation.

Who is the Greater Kaweah GSA?

The Greater Kaweah Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) is a **local, public, stakeholder-driven agency** formed to develop and implement a Groundwater Sustainability Plan to achieve sustainable groundwater supply in compliance with California's law the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

What is an allocation?

A groundwater allocation is a limit on pumping.

What lands are currently subject to an allocation?

The GKGSA is responsible for groundwater management for all lands within the GSA. The Rules and Regulations currently provide management actions to the Greater Kaweah Ag Management Area, which includes irrigated and non-irrigated ag land. Further restrictions are coming.

How is the groundwater allocation determined?

The allocation is based on technical data for the Kaweah Subbasin, the GKGSA [Rules and Regulations](#), and the [GKGSA 2022 Amended Groundwater Sustainability Plan](#) and is the amount of groundwater that can be used for WY 2023.

What is Greater Kaweah GSA's Water Year 2023 (October 2022- September 2023) Groundwater Allocation?

The approved groundwater allocations set a limit on groundwater pumping for Water Year 2023 and are as follows (units are in evapotranspiration i.e., net usage):

- Sustainable Yield Allocation is 0.83 acre-feet/acre
- Tier 1 Penalty Allocation is 0.83 acre-feet/acre
- Tier 2 Penalty Allocation is 1.04 acre-feet/acre

How will landowners be notified about the annual groundwater allocation?

Each year a notification will be sent from the Greater Kaweah GSA General Manager to landowners prior to October 1, or as close as practical to that date.

Can a landowner exceed their allocation?

No. If a landowner exceeds the Tier 2 allocation, a \$500 penalty per acre-foot will be imposed. In addition, the following year's allocation will be reduced by the amount of exceedance. Further enforcement may be implemented depending on the severity of the exceedance.

What if I have surface water? Do I get a credit for not using groundwater?

Yes. The diversion of surface water will need to be reported from the applicable surface water entity to the Greater Kaweah GSA. Credits may also apply for groundwater recharge or banking activities, if available.

How do dairies’ unique circumstances fit under the groundwater allocation?

The Greater Kaweah GSA Board understands that dairies have unique and complex operations. The Greater Kaweah GSA has worked with stakeholders and technical experts within the dairy industry to develop a Special Uses Management Area for dairies. The consumptive use of groundwater within the Special Uses Management Area for dairies will be calculated using the methodology contained in the Rules and Regulations Exhibit B, *Net Groundwater Consumption Within A Dairy Facility Area*. Alternatively, an owner may elect to use flowmeters.

How will landowner groundwater recharge be accounted for?

The surface water entity responsible for delivering surface water to the landowner will be required to verify the recharge activity. Surface water stored and reported in compliance with the Rules and Regulations shall be credited to the landowner’s account.

Can I carry over my unused allocation?

Yes, but not at a 1:1 ratio.

For the Sustainable Yield allocation: If a landowner uses less than their total allocation of Sustainable Yield in a given year, the difference with an initial, nominal leave behind between the allocation amount for that year and the amount of groundwater used and/or transferred for that year shall be carried over to the next year. The amount may be carried over on a five-year rolling basis with a 10% reduction in the amount of the carryover in the first year only.

Carryover example for WY 2023

(0.83 acre-feet/acre allocation) – (0.33 acre-feet/acre used groundwater) = 0.50 WY 2023 carryover

Year 1 (WY 2024) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(0.50 carryover) - (0.05 10 % reduction) = 0.45 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 2 (WY 2025) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **0.45 acre-feet/acre**

Year 3 (WY 2026) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **0.45 acre-feet/acre**

Year 4 - WY 2025 allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **0.45 acre-feet/acre**

Year 5 - WY 2025 allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **0.45 acre-feet/acre**

Year 6 –WY 2023 carryover not allowed

For the Tier 1 and Tier 2 allocations: If a landowner uses less than their total allocation of Tier 1 and Tier 2 in a given year, the difference with an annual, nominal leave behind between the allocation amount for that year and the amount of groundwater used and/or transferred for that year shall be carried over to the next year. The amount may be carried over on a five-year rolling basis with a 10% reduction in the amount of the carryover in each of the five years.

Carryover example for WY 2023

(1.87 acre-feet/acre allocation) – (0.87 acre-feet/acre used groundwater) = 1.00 WY 2023 carryover

Year 1 (WY 2024) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(1.00 carryover) - (0.10 10 % reduction) = 0.90 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 2 (WY 2025) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(0.90 carryover) - (0.10 10 % reduction) = 0.80 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 3 (WY 2026) allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(0.80 carryover) - (0.10 10 % reduction) = 0.70 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 4 - WY 2025 allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(0.70 carryover) - (0.10 10 % reduction) = 0.60 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 5 - WY 2025 allowed carryover from WY 2023 = **(0.60 carryover) - (0.10 10 % reduction) = 0.50 acre-feet/acre carryover**

Year 6 –WY 2023 carryover not allowed

How does the allocation apply to parcels with land split by two GSAs or by the Subbasin boundary?

Please contact GKGSA staff for more information.

How will the Greater Kaweah GSA track my allocation?

The Kaweah Subbasin is contracted with Land IQ to collect monthly evapotranspiration (ET) data at the field level (LandIQ [FAQs](#)). This data will inform the Greater Kaweah GSAs implementation of the allocation by providing detailed, field-scale water use estimation calculated as ET, or the amount of water consumed by the plant through evaporation and transpiration. Using ET tells us the amount of water consumed by the crop, rather than just the total water applied. This is the default method for all irrigated land subject to the allocation program. Surface water deliveries, and any other credits to a landowner's account will be subtracted from total water use. Alternatively, landowners can choose to provide the Greater Kaweah GSA with data from flowmeters.

Will I be able to track my groundwater use?

The Kaweah Subbasin GSAs have developed an online Water Accounting Dashboard to allow landowners to track their own groundwater use and credits. The Dashboard, still in early stages of development, shall account for water through seven categories: surface water credits and debit for direct delivery, sustainable yield allocation, temporary Tier 1 allocation, temporary Tier 2 allocation, groundwater credits, recharge and banking credits and debits, recycled water, and prohibited Tier 3 pumping. Landowners can create a Water Dashboard account at www.gsawd.com.

Will I have to install a meter?

Not at this time. Use is being tracked by Land IQ, but a landowner does have the option to meter and track use through a meter.

What are the costs associated with the allocation program?

If a landowner uses more than the Sustainable Yield Allocation of 0.83 acre-feet/acre of groundwater there will be penalty costs. For WY 2023 Tier 1, the Penalty Rate is \$125 per acre foot, and for Tier 2, the Penalty Rate is \$250 per acre foot. If a landowner exceeds the Tier 2 allocation, a \$500 penalty per acre foot will be imposed. In addition, the following year's allocation will be reduced by the amount of Tier 2 exceedance (a 1:1 ratio).

DISCLAIMER:

This document is meant to be a general guidance for policies set by the GKGSA Board of Directors. GKGSA Rules and Regulations as well as other policies impacting responses to this FAQ are evolving and are subject to change. Please contact GSA staff for any changes that may have occurred since this document was published.

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