

5.0 THE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The plan development process included an assessment of groundwater problems and issues in the basin, a compilation of available tools for groundwater management, and an identification of alternative actions to address the specific problems and issues. The key result of this process was a series of recommended actions for the Commission and others to best address the widespread and major groundwater resources problems and issues that were identified.

As discussed in Section 2, Groundwater Resource Issues, Problems, and Recommendations, some of the recommendations can be applied to address site-specific physical problems in areas with: (1) intensive growth and development; (2) intensive water use in small basins; (3) watershed transfers; (4) loss of clean water input to AMD-impacted streams; (5) unknown and unregulated groundwater use; (6) scarcity of clean water due to widespread AMD impacts; (7) drought impacts to base streamflow; (8) impacts from mining; and (9) unmet flow compensation needs.

The recommendations presented in Section 3, Management Issues and Recommendations, include actions to address: (1) multi-agency coordination; (2) changes to water resource utilization over time; (3) regulatory duplication; (4) increased knowledge about groundwater as a resource; (5) performance and accountability of this management plan; (6) review and update of the plan; and (7) funding to implement the plan. Taken together, the recommendations, contained in Sections 2 and 3 of the plan and summarized in Section 6 and Appendix E, constitute the major element of the Groundwater Management Plan.

The plan also includes actions for enhancing groundwater management support programs. Implementation responsibility for these supported actions lies mainly with federal, state, and local governments. The Commission does have co-lead responsibilities on five actions and assistance or support for seven actions. Issues to be addressed can be grouped into several topics: (1) protection of groundwater sources of water supply and aquifers; (2) water use and availability information; (3) well requirements; and (4) assessment of state and federal groundwater programs. Recommendations for addressing these issues are discussed in Section 4, Support Programs and Recommendations. These recommendations also are summarized in Section 6 and Appendix E, and constitute a second and important element of the Groundwater Management Plan.

The management plan is fairly evenly balanced among regulatory, planning, public outreach/education, and management actions. Of the 39 recommended actions included in the plan, 13 are regulatory in nature, 11 are related to planning, and 15 involve outreach/education and management.

In addition to this document, a short summary of the plan has been prepared for general distribution. The full plan will be most useful to those having a need for or interest in the details of the plan, particularly the recommended actions and their implementation. The summary version presents an overview of the full plan and is intended to provide a basic understanding of the plan's development and results.

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