



Policy No: NKGSA – 2020-003
Policy Title: New Well Review Policy
Board Approval Date: December XX, 2020

1.0 Purpose

There are three purposes for the New Well Review Policy;

1. Provide direction to the Executive Officer (EO) of the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency (NKGSA) when evaluating applications for construction of new water well permits (extraction facilities) within the NKGSA boundary.
2. Request Fresno County and the Cities of Fresno, Clovis and Kerman (permitting agencies) to provide a minimum review period and information when routing applications for construction of new water well permits to the NKGSA.
3. Utilize data collected from the well permit applications for inclusion in the NKGSA records.

2.0 Background

The NKGSA covers the northeast portion of the Kings Groundwater Sub-basin in Fresno County. It is one of seven groundwater sustainability agencies within the Kings Sub-basin.

A Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) establishes the NKGSA governance and the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Plan (NKGSA GSP) provides the roadmap for how the NKGSA will reach long-term sustainability. Combined, the two documents provide the framework and management strategies for achieving and maintaining groundwater sustainability within the NKGSA plan area. Member agencies of the NKGSA, including the County of Fresno and Cities of Fresno, Clovis and Kerman have authority to issue water well permits within their jurisdiction

3.0 Rationale for Policy

Additional well requirements may be required to more effectively manage and understand the dynamic groundwater conditions within the NKGSA boundary. The permitting agencies have authority to issue well permits within their jurisdiction. The NKGSA is interested in receiving all applications for water well permits from the permitting agencies to increase data collection, reporting, and overall ongoing groundwater management efforts. Further, the NKGSA GSP Section 6.3.2 (Page 6-14 of the NKGSA GSP) specifies the following may be requested by the NKGSA in separate well policies:

- Registration of extraction facilities (wells) within the NKGSA.
- Require the installation of wellhead meters, sounding tubes, and water quality sample ports.
- Require well owners to self-report groundwater extraction volumes, static water levels, and water quality data.

The NKGSA GSP specifies the NKGSA may consider separating the additional well requirements management actions into multiple policies or be silent on various bulleted components until the NKGSA deems them necessary. This New Well Review Policy is addressing the registration of extraction facilities (new wells) within the NKGSA which includes provisions for up to five business days to review well permit applications received from the permitting agencies. The well registry will be created from records obtained from the permitting agencies so that a separate submission to the NKGSA by the driller/well owner is not necessary.

The NKGSA has worked cooperatively with the permitting agencies to gather information including well location information, anticipated depth of the well, and anticipated screened interval of the proposed well at the time the permit application is submitted. For well destruction permit applications, the reason for destruction of the well has been added as required information.

For purposes of this Policy, a well permit is defined as an application to the permitting agency for a permit to allow the construction of a new well for purposes of groundwater extractions of any type, construction of a replacement well for purposes of groundwater extractions of any type, reconstruction or deepening of a well for purposes of groundwater extractions of any type; injection wells for purposes of injecting water into the groundwater aquifer; and destruction of a well of any type.

4.0 Scope and Applicability

This Policy specifically applies to:

- a. That portion of the Kings Subbasin located in Fresno County lying and situate within NKGSA boundaries (as depicted in Exhibit A, attached and incorporated herein);
- b. All well permit applications received from permitting agencies for well construction activities as described in Section 3.0, within the NKGSA boundary;
- c. All data collected by NKGSA and/or its consultants and other partners pursuant to the well construction activities within NKGSA; and
- d. All property owners at locations where well construction activities are taking place within the NKGSA boundary.

5.0 Authority

As a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) properly organized pursuant to the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act of 2014 (Water Code 10720 et. Seq.) (SGMA), NKGSA is authorized to adopt rules, regulations, ordinances, and resolutions for purposes of fulfilling its obligations as a GSA (Water Code 10725.2 (b)), and NKGSA adopts this Policy pursuant to this authority.

6.0 Data Collection and Monitoring

The ability to monitor groundwater extractions requires an accurate accounting of all extraction facilities (wells) within the NKGSA boundary. The NKGSA relies on the online Department of Water Resources (DWR) Well Completion Report Map Application tool to gather information on existing wells (groundwater extraction facilities) within the NKGSA boundary. However, through previous research efforts, the NKGSA understands many existing wells do not have well completion reports or have not been entered into the DWR database and may be absent from the existing records. The intent of the NKGSA requesting permitting agencies route well permit applications to the NKGSA is to complement the existing well recordkeeping and help the EO fully understand and quantify the potential impacts of groundwater decline.

7.0 Policy Statement

With acknowledgement of the information set forth herein above, until further modified as set forth hereafter, the following shall serve as the NKGSA Policy for Well Construction Activity within the NKGSA boundary:

- a. The EO, or his/her designee, shall review all water well permit applications received from permitting agencies. The EO shall evaluate water well permit applications for location, proposed depth, and other construction details related to the monitoring and quantity and quality of groundwater for the proposed well permit activities. Further, the EO shall communicate to the permitting agency when it has been determined that construction of a new well may result in an undesirable result as defined in the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Plan.
- b. The EO shall maintain new well records for the NKGSA. These records shall be used to monitor groundwater extractions, maintain an accurate accounting of all extraction facilities within the NKGSA boundary, understanding of potential water quality impacts, and understanding and quantify the potential impacts of groundwater decline.
- c. To assist in the EO's review of new water well permit applications and the creation of new well records, the EO shall request the following of permitting agencies:
 1. Provide a minimum of five business days for the review and commenting on all well permitting applications. NKGSA recognizes that a shorter review period, or no review period, may be provided depending on unique or exceptional circumstances as determined by the permitting agencies.

2. Submittal of Well Completion Reports and Well Destruction Reports for activities occurring after the effective date of this policy.
3. Access to permitting agency's data for tracking well activities within their jurisdictions.
- d. The NKGSA shall work directly with well owners on any request to maintain wells proposed for destruction for monitoring purposes by the NKGSA.
- e. NKGSA shall coordinate, cooperate, and collaborate with the permitting agencies and landowners of well construction activities for implementation of this Policy.

8.0 Effective Date and Modification

- a. This Policy shall become effective upon its passage and adoption.
- b. NKGSA's Board of Directors may modify this Policy at any time, at its sole discretion, pursuant to the applicable procedures described in NKGSA's bylaws.

The foregoing New Well Policy was passed and adopted by the Board of Directors for the North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency, at a regular meeting thereof held on the ____ day of _____, 2020, by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

ABSENT:

Chairperson, Board of Directors

Mr. Jerry Prieto

North Kings Groundwater Sustainability Agency

ATTEST:

Kassy D. Chauhan, P.E.

Approved as to legal form and effect:

Kevin R. Dale, Esq. AALRR

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