

Water Rights and Water Law

Water is the most fundamental commodity necessary for the operation of society. Its production and distribution is governed both by complex statutory provisions and regulations, and by case law bearing its own legal vocabulary. Expert water representation requires a fundamental understanding of hydrologic principles and the ability to develop policy and legal strategies working together with the client, engineers and other scientific experts. RWG has decades of experience providing advice to public agencies, private water producers, and rate payers concerning those statutes, regulations and common law authorities.

RWG represents its clients in the construction, operation and maintenance of water supply systems, interagency water supply agreements, water quality and treatment issues, and water rate structures and related Proposition 218 issues and constraints. RWG provides General Counsel services for water supply entities throughout the state. Current General Counsel clients include Antelope Valley-East Kern Water Agency, Nipomo Community Services District, and Beaumont-Cherry Valley Water District. RWG also serves as General Counsel to Court created entities presently managing groundwater basins, including Central Basin Water Rights Panel, Borrego Springs Watermaster and Six Basins Watermaster. Those representations merge RWG's water law capability with its general legal services expertise advising dozens of California local public entities.

RWG has represented clients on services and water allocation issues for over 45 years, including groundwater rights, surface water rights, military reserved rights, tribal reserved rights and rights to produce water in accordance with a groundwater sustainability plan. The creation of Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and the generation of basin implementation plans requires intense legal attention at this time when local water producers are newly required by state law to sustain each basin as a resource while allocating water to competing producers. Efforts to do so must be successful to ward off state level intervention. RWG provides crucial advice to clients with water production interests in a number of basins as to which sustainability plans must be approved within a short period of time. RWG represents many clients in California on matters involving the implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

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Since 1969, RWG attorneys have litigated water allocation and management issues in full basin groundwater adjudications. Included in that litigation are multiple landmark adjudications, including Antelope Valley, Central Basin, Chino Basin, Cummings Basin, Las Posas, Main San Gabriel, Mojave River Basin, Santa Maria, and Six Basins.