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**AB-321 Groundwater sustainability agencies.** (2017-2018)

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**Assembly Bill No. 321**

**CHAPTER 67**

An act to amend Section 10723.2 of the Water Code, relating to water.

[ Approved by Governor July 17, 2017. Filed with Secretary of State July 17, 2017. ]

**LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST**

AB 321, Mathis. Groundwater sustainability agencies.

Existing law, the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, requires all groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins by the Department of Water Resources that are designated as basins subject to critical conditions of overdraft to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan or coordinated groundwater sustainability plans by January 31, 2020, and requires all other groundwater basins designated as high- or medium-priority basins to be managed under a groundwater sustainability plan or coordinated groundwater sustainability plans by January 31, 2022, except as specified. The act authorizes any local agency or combination of local agencies overlying a groundwater basin to decide to become a groundwater sustainability agency for that basin, as prescribed. The act requires a groundwater sustainability agency to consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans, including, among other interests, holders of overlying groundwater rights, including agricultural users and domestic well owners.

This bill would specifically include farmers, ranchers, and dairy professionals in the agricultural users whose interests a groundwater sustainability agency is required to consider.

Vote: majority Appropriation: no Fiscal Committee: no Local Program: no

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:**

**SECTION 1.** Section 10723.2 of the Water Code is amended to read:

**10723.2.** The groundwater sustainability agency shall consider the interests of all beneficial uses and users of groundwater, as well as those responsible for implementing groundwater sustainability plans. These interests include, but are not limited to, all of the following:

(a) Holders of overlying groundwater rights, including:

- (1) Agricultural users, including farmers, ranchers, and dairy professionals.
- (2) Domestic well owners.

(b) Municipal well operators.

- (c) Public water systems.
- (d) Local land use planning agencies.
- (e) Environmental users of groundwater.
- (f) Surface water users, if there is a hydrologic connection between surface and groundwater bodies.
- (g) The federal government, including, but not limited to, the military and managers of federal lands.
- (h) California Native American tribes.
- (i) Disadvantaged communities, including, but not limited to, those served by private domestic wells or small community water systems.
- (j) Entities listed in Section 10927 that are monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations in all or a part of a groundwater basin managed by the groundwater sustainability agency.