

Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA)

Request for Proposals (RFP)

Comprehensive Fee Study

I. Purpose

The Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority (SCGA or Authority) is requesting proposals from firms qualified to conduct a Comprehensive Fee Study to evaluate and redesign the Authority's revenue structure.

The selected firm will evaluate existing funding mechanisms, develop alternative fee methodologies, and recommend and design a funding approach that is equitable, transparent, and administratively efficient.

To be considered, proposals must be submitted electronically by July 3, 2026. Proposals will be reviewed by a selection team consisting of SCGA staff and may include Board representatives. The selection team will make a recommendation to the Board, and upon approval, an agreement will be executed.

There is no expressed or implied obligation for SCGA to reimburse responding firms for any expenses incurred in preparing proposals.

SCGA reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, waive non-material irregularities, and accept or reject any items or combination of items. Materials submitted are subject to public inspection under the California Public Records Act.

II. Background

The Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) requires local agencies to manage groundwater basins sustainably and to demonstrate measurable progress through ongoing planning, monitoring, and reporting.

SCGA is a joint powers authority formed in 2006 and serves as a Groundwater Sustainability Agency (GSA) for a portion of the South American Subbasin (SASb). The Authority is responsible for implementing its Groundwater Sustainability Plan (GSP) and coordinating with other GSAs in the basin.

The Authority's FY 2027 budget is approximately \$1.16 million. SASb water year (WY) 2025 extraction were 187,900 acre-feet (AF): 41,600 AF municipal and industrial, 118,400 AF agricultural and residential agricultural, and 27,900 AF remediation use.

SCGA currently derives revenue from three primary sources:

- Member contributions;
- Cost-sharing arrangements with other GSAs in the subbasin; and
- A groundwater assessment fee.

While these mechanisms have supported SCGA to date, the structure has become increasingly complex as SGMA implementation has evolved. The Authority is seeking to evaluate alternatives that:

- Simplify the overall revenue structure;
- Improve equity and fairness among stakeholders;
- Increase transparency; and
- Reduce administrative burden and overhead.

Although SCGA's Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) and related agreements include provisions regarding funding, this study is not constrained by those provisions and should evaluate all feasible and legally defensible approaches.

III. Requested Services

SCGA is seeking a consultant to perform a comprehensive evaluation of funding options and develop a recommended fee structure. The Authority desires to implement the new fee structure in time to support the revenue for FY 2028 (starting July 1, 2027).

1. Evaluation of Existing Funding Structure

- Assess current revenue sources for adequacy, stability, and inter-GSA cost sharing equity
- Identify inefficiencies, redundancies, and administrative challenges

2. Development of Alternative Funding Approaches

- Identify and evaluate a range of fee methodologies, including:
 - Parcel-based
 - Volumetric (groundwater use-based)
 - Hybrid approaches
 - Benefit-based methods
- Evaluate alternatives based on:
 - Equity and proportionality
 - Transparency and stakeholder understanding
 - Administrative feasibility and cost
 - Legal defensibility (including Proposition 26 and Proposition 218 considerations, if applicable)

3. Stakeholder Engagement

- Engage SCGA Board members, member agencies, and other GSAs
- Engage key stakeholder groups as appropriate
- Document input and incorporate into evaluation

4. Recommended Funding Approach

- Provide a clear recommendation supported by technical and policy analysis
- Demonstrate how the recommended approach improves upon the existing structure

5. Fee Design

- Develop detailed fee structure, including:
 - Cost allocation methodology
 - Customer classes
 - Rate calculations
- Provide revenue projections and adequacy analysis

6. Implementation Support

- Identify legal requirements and process steps for adoption
- Support preparation of materials for Board consideration
- Provide a roadmap for implementation and transition
- Support coordination with the Sacramento County Treasurer-Tax Collector and any other agencies

7. Additional Services (Optional)

- Periodic (annual) rate/fee implementation support

8. Deliverables

- Technical memoranda
- Draft and final Fee Study Report
- Presentation materials for Board and stakeholders
- Supporting documentation for public process

IV. RFP Timeline and Evaluation Criteria

1. Timeline

SCGA anticipates the following timeline:

Action	Date
RFP issuance	June 10, 2026

Action	Date
Deadline for questions	June 24, 2026
Proposals due	July 3, 2026
Review of proposals	July 14, 2026
Interviews (if needed)	July 20-21, 2026
Board approval	August 20, 2026
Agreement execution	August 31, 2026

2. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the information presented and may include interviews or additional information requests.

Evaluation criteria include:

- Qualifications and experience of the firm and assigned staff (15%)
- Understanding of SGMA funding challenges and SCGA's needs (25%)
- Approach and methodology (25%)
- Experience with similar engagements, GSAs preferred (15%)
- Cost and overall value (20%)

SCGA retains full discretion in determining the applicability and weight of these criteria.

3. SCGA Rights and Options

During the evaluation process, SCGA reserves the right to:

- Request additional information or clarification
 - Waive minor defects or irregularities
 - Conduct interviews or presentations
 - Negotiate scope and contract terms
 - Reject any or all proposals
-

V. Proposal Requirements

Proposals must be submitted electronically in PDF format and clearly identified as:

“SCGA Fee Study Proposal”

Submit proposals to:

Piret Harmon, Executive Director
Sacramento Central Groundwater Authority
executivedirector@scgah2o.com

Proposal Content

Proposals should be limited to 20 pages, concise, well organized, and include the following:

1. Firm Qualifications and Experience

- Description of firm and relevant experience
- Experience with SGMA, GSAs, and fee studies

2. Staff Qualifications and Experience

- Key personnel and roles
- Relevant experience and expertise

3. Similar Engagements

- Description of at least three similar projects completed
- Client contact information

4. Project Approach

- Understanding of SGMA and its funding challenges
- Understanding SCGA's needs
- Proposed methodology and work plan
- Data that is requested to be provided by SCGA
- Anticipated challenges and approach

5. Cost Proposal

- Total not-to-exceed cost
- Breakdown of costs and assumptions (tasks, rates, etc)
- Hourly rates by staff classification

6. Additional Services

- Description of any optional or additional services
 - Billing rates for additional work
-