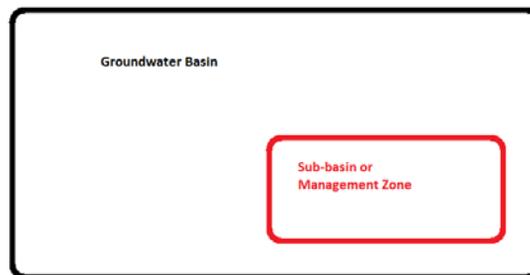


## What Are "Management Zones?"

- 1) Traditionally, water quality standards are applied to discrete surface water bodies or ground water basins. Where appropriate, rivers and streams may be divided into "segments" and ground water basins may be divided into "sub-basins" to facilitate better resource management and regulatory oversight based on site-specific factors. Compliance with water quality standards can be, and often is, assessed independently for each segment or sub-basin.
- 2) Similarly, a "Management Zone" is comprised of all or part of a groundwater basin and is functionally-equivalent to the concept of a "sub-basin" as that term is used in the Recycled Water Policy. But, the management zone also encompasses many activities that occur at the surface that ultimately affect water quality in the sub-basin.



- 3) Management Zones are voluntarily proposed by stakeholders in the regulated community and must be approved by the Regional Board.
- 4) As a practical matter, when one or more dischargers propose to establish a "Management Zone," that MZ will likely encompass:
  - a) Virtually all of the regulated points-of-discharge.
  - b) All of the groundwater under the influence of the discharge(s)
  - c) All of the wells affected, or likely to be affected, by the discharge(s)
  - d) And, all of the groundwater used to calculate the existence of assimilative capacity in the sub-basin associated with Management Zone.

- 5) When a Management Zone is proposed, the regulated dischargers agreeing to demonstrate compliance...
  - a) By showing there is sufficient assimilative capacity, in the Management Zone as a whole, to ensure that the discharge will not cause or contribute to an exceedance of the applicable water quality standards.
  - b) By showing that allowing lower water quality, consistent with Best Practicable Treatment or Control (BPTC), will provide "maximum benefit to the people of California."
  - c) By accepting responsibility to address "localized impacts" and protect beneficial uses through other means. See sister document entitled: "What Are Alternative Compliance Programs/Projects?"
  
- 6) Where water quality for individual wells within the Management Zone does not meet drinking water standards for a given pollutant, and dischargers propose to rely on calculated assimilative capacity for that same pollutant, then the dischargers must accept responsibility for protecting the designated beneficial use (MUN) by providing an alternate means of meeting the drinking water standard (e.g. alternate water supply, well-head treatment, point-of-entry treatment, etc.).
  
- 7) The entire concept rests on the proposition that it is possible to have "assimilative capacity" for a specific pollutant in the overall Management Zone, even if individual wells are exceeding the water quality standard for that same pollutant, but ONLY if the MUN beneficial use at these well locations is protected through other means. This approach is particularly useful (e.g. provides "maximum benefit") where existing well water already exceeds drinking water standards and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future even if nearby discharges installed treatment to meet water quality standards or were prohibited entirely.
  
- 8) The existence of a Management Zone does NOT compel all dischargers located within the zone to participate in the associated Alternative Compliance Program. Those who elect not to participate may continue to demonstrate compliance by the traditional methods or to propose a different, but concurrent AC project. Where a discharger is able to meet applicable water quality standards at First Encountered Groundwater, there is less incentive to propose or join a Management Zone.