



## GROUNDWATER RECHARGE BENEFITS MORE THAN GROUNDWATER

*New analysis from the Sacramento region confirms that groundwater recharge can strengthen water supplies, support rivers, and provide environmental benefits.*

### Recharge activities have helped:



Improve groundwater conditions



Support river and ecosystem health



Increase drought resilience



Strengthen regional water reliability



Advance long-term groundwater sustainability



Reduce the risk of land subsidence

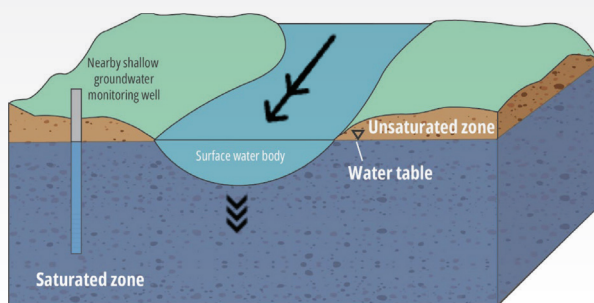


Protect groundwater quality

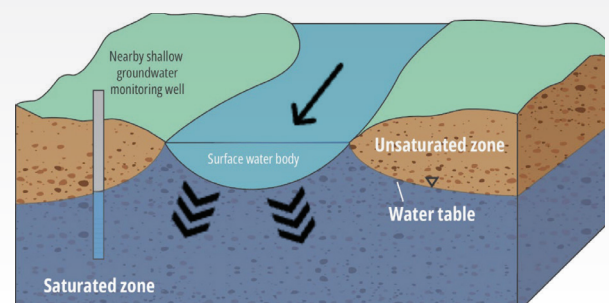
### The Common Misconception

Groundwater recharge is often viewed as a way to store water underground for future use. While that is an important benefit, recharge can also improve conditions in connected rivers, streams, and ecosystems.

In the Sacramento region, decades of groundwater banking and recharge have increased groundwater levels, improved drought resilience, and contributed water to the Lower American River.



With Recharge



Without Recharge

### Groundwater and Rivers Are Connected

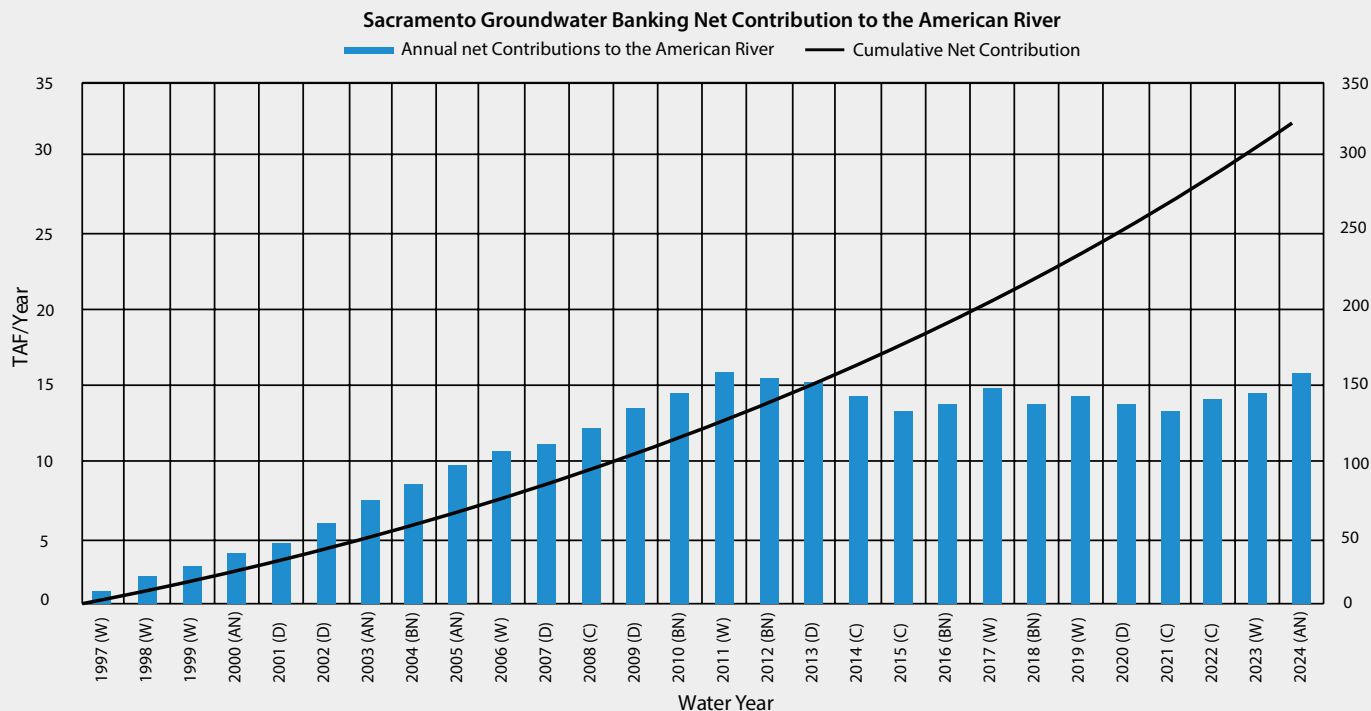
When groundwater levels decline, rivers can lose water to the surrounding aquifer. However, when groundwater levels increase through recharge, less river water is lost underground, and more water remains in the river system. This relationship means that investments in groundwater recharge can provide benefits both below and above ground.

# What We Found

A recent analysis of groundwater banking activities from 1997 to 2024 found that recharge provides benefits both underground and above ground.

Approximately half of the water banked since 1997 remains available in groundwater storage to support future drought resilience. The other half has contributed to rivers and neighboring groundwater basins, helping support streamflows, ecosystems, and regional water sustainability.

Groundwater banking has contributed more than 300,000 acre-feet of additional flow to the Lower American River since 1997. Today, these activities contribute approximately 14,000 to 16,000 acre-feet of additional water to the river each year.



This graph demonstrates the increasing contribution of groundwater banking activities to the Lower American River over time.

## Why This Matters for AB 2026

AB 2026 helps remove barriers that limit groundwater recharge opportunities only after existing environmental and other water user requirements are met. By making it easier to capture water during wet periods and store it underground, California can:

- Increase water supply reliability and build towards our long-term water supply goals
- Improve groundwater conditions
- Support connected rivers and ecosystems
- Build resilience to drought and climate change

**Groundwater recharge does more than strengthen aquifers —it helps support healthier aquifers, healthier rivers, and a more resilient water system.**



## Learn More:

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For more information about the Sacramento Regional Water Bank visit [SacWaterBank.com](http://SacWaterBank.com).

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