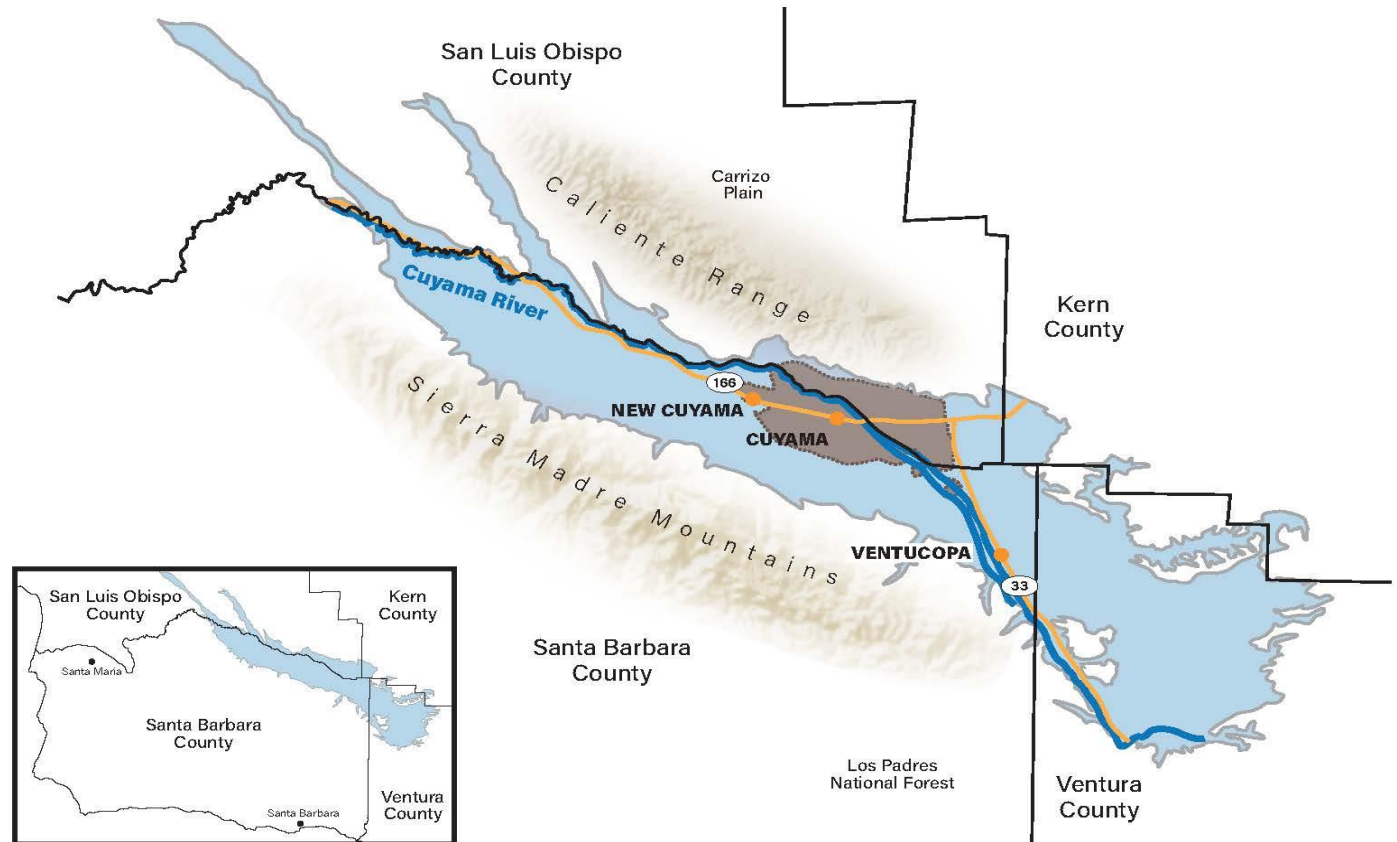


GROUNDWATER IN THE CUYAMA VALLEY

SGMA'S IMPACT ON SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS: A COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVE

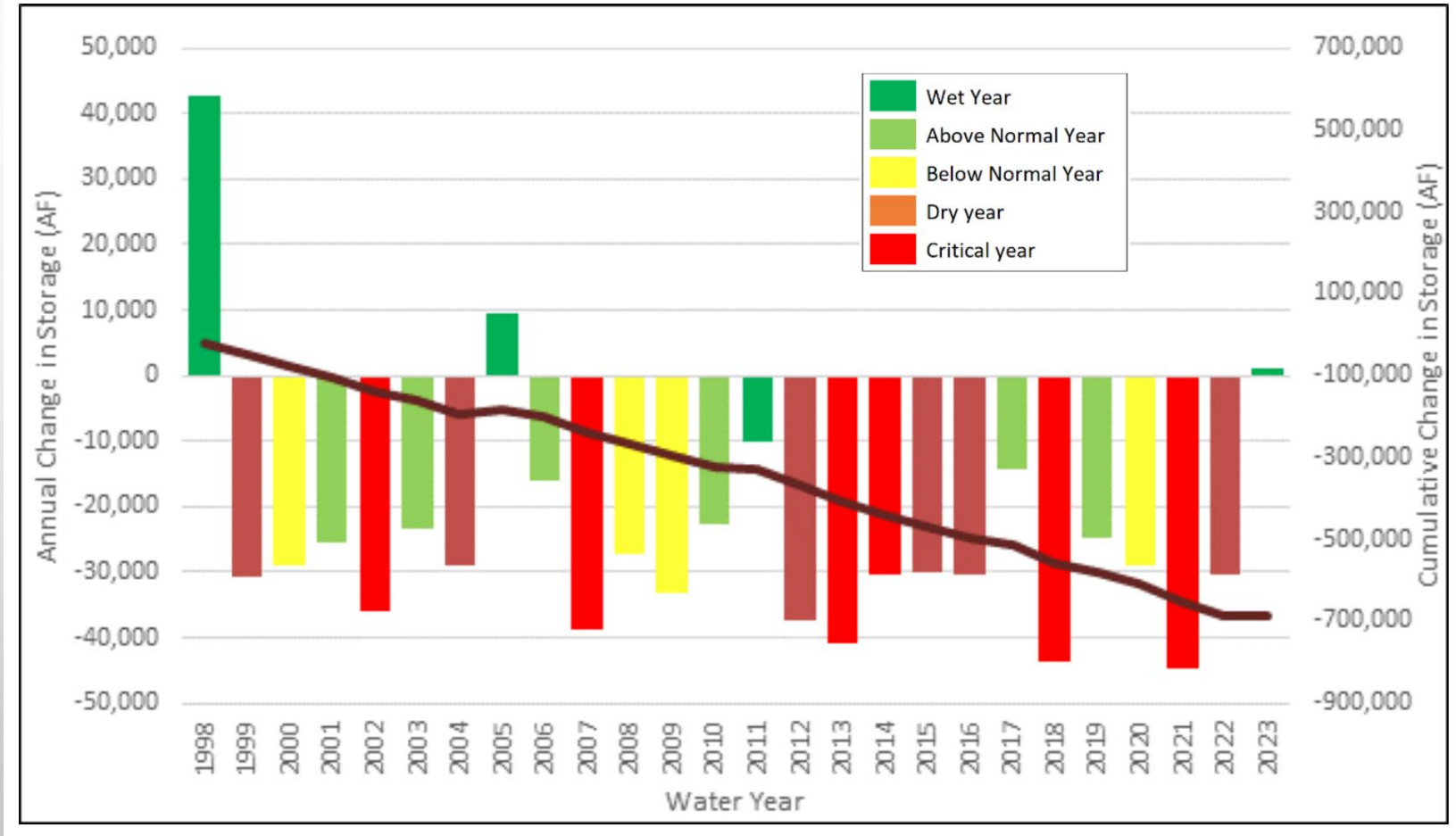
- ROUGHLY 1,800 POPULATION
- MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME \$62,400
- 378 SQUARE MILES
- 2,900 – 2,100 FT ABOVE SEA LEVEL
- OVERLIES 4 COUNTIES
- ENTIRELY DEPENDENT ON GROUNDWATER FOR ALL USES

CUYAMA VALLEY GROUNDWATER BASIN



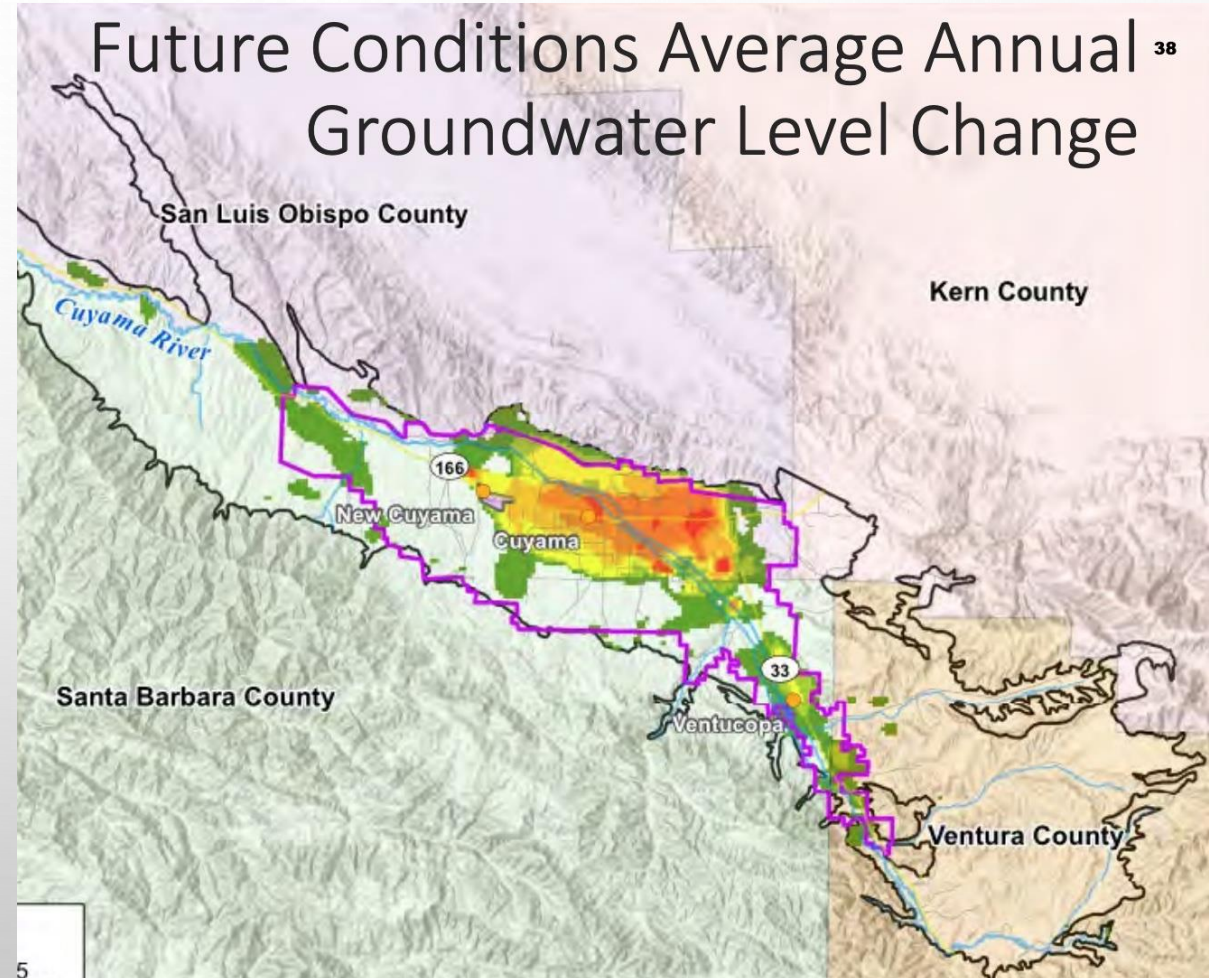
CRITICAL OVERDRAFT

- CUYAMA IS ONE OF 21 BASINS IN CA CONSIDERED IN “CRITICAL OVERDRAFT”
- SUSTAINED LOSS OF GROUNDWATER STORAGE FOR MORE THAN 50 YEARS



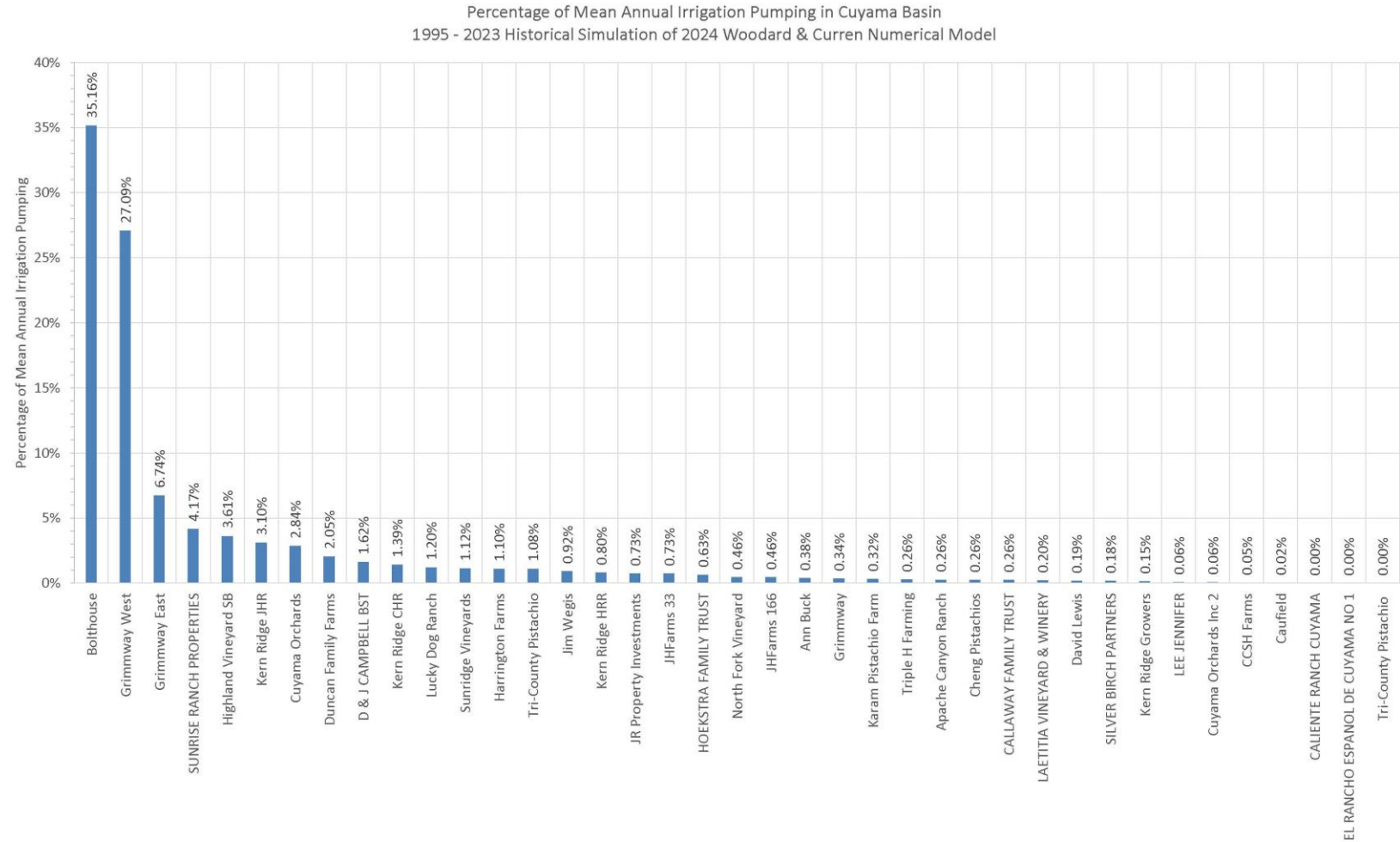
CUYAMA BASIN OVERDRAFT

- BASIN-WIDE PUMPING ESTIMATED AT 42,400 ACRE-FEET/YEAR
- “SUSTAINABLE YIELD” ESTIMATED AT 16,800 ACRE-FEET/YEAR. WILL NEED TO CUT PUMPING BY 60% TO BRING BASIN INTO BALANCE
- NO REALISTIC POTENTIAL FOR RECHARGE OTHER THAN RAINWATER AND MINOR RUN-OFF



CONTEXT OF HISTORICAL USE

- 69% OF TOTAL GROUNDWATER EXTRACTED BY TWO LARGEST PUMPER COMBINED
- 2.4% OF TOTAL GROUNDWATER EXTRACTED BY ALL PUMPER COMBINED THAT USE <100AF PER YEAR
- 2.4% IS WITHIN THE MARGIN OF ERROR IN THE BASIN'S WATER MODEL



GOVERNANCE OF SGMA IN CUYAMA BASIN

CUYAMA GSA: 11-MEMBER BOARD FORMED VIA JPA; FIRST MEETING AUGUST 2017

SANTA BARBARA COUNTY	2 SEATS	2 VOTES
SAN LUIS OBISPO COUNTY	1 SEAT	1 VOTE
VENTURA COUNTY	1 SEAT	1 VOTE
KERN COUNTY	1 SEAT	1 VOTE
CUYAMA COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT (CCSD*)	1 SEAT	1 VOTE
CUYAMA BASIN WATER DISTRICT**	5 SEATS	3 VOTES

- *CCSD: RESIDENTIAL WATER DISTRICT SERVES 225 RATEPAYERS IN THE TOWNSITE OF NEW CUYAMA. MONTHLY BILL IS ~\$200/MO IN A COMMUNITY WITH MEDIAN HH INCOME OF \$61,250
- **SEATS CURRENTLY HELD BY: GRIMMWAY FARMS, BOLTHOUSE PROPERTIES, SUNRIDGE NURSERIES, CUYAMA APPLES, CALIENTE RANCH

GSA SUPPORT STRUCTURE

- STANDING ADVISORY COMMITTEE: NINE MEMBERS INCLUDING LOCAL FARMERS, RANCHERS, RESIDENTS AND A NON-RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF BOLTHOUSE PROPERTIES.
- TECH FORUM: HYDROGEOLOGY EXPERTS, WITH REGULAR PARTICIPANTS REPRESENTING THE CUYAMA BASIN WATER DISTRICT, GRAPEVINE CAPITAL (HARVARD), SUNRISE OLIVE, SANTA BARBARA COUNTY; SMALL FARMER/RANCHER NETWORK; PARTICIPATION MUST BE APPROVED BY THE GSA
- AD HOC COMMITTEES DESIGNATED BY THE GSA BOARD TO ADDRESS SPECIFIC ISSUES COMPRISED OF GSA BOARD MEMBERS

SGMA – WHERE WE ARE NOW

- GROUNDWATER SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (GSP) FILED IN 2020; DWR DEFICIENCY LETTER ISSUED IN 2021; REVISED GSP RE-SUBMITTED AND APPROVED IN 2022
- ADJUDICATION FILED IN AUGUST 2021 BY GRIMMWAY FARMS + 3 ASSOCIATED LANDOWNERS; BOLTHOUSE FARMS + BOLTHOUSE PROPERTIES
- GSA JOINS THE ADJUDICATION IN 2023 CAUSING SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
- SUBMITTED 5-YEAR UPDATE TO THE GSP; PUBLIC COMMENT NOW UNDERWAY
- AFTER 10 YEARS OF SGMA, NO GSP-REQUIRED REDUCTIONS IN GROUND WATER PUMPING HAVE TAKEN PLACE IN THE CUYAMA VALLEY

IMPACT OF SGMA ON SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS

- FINANCIAL IMPACTS: STACKED ASSESSMENTS/FEEES INCLUDE AG WATER DISTRICT FEE + PUMPING FEE TO SUPPORT GSA + LEGAL REPRESENTATION IN ADJUDICATION + POTENTIAL FOR ADDITIONAL FEE TO SUPPORT WATERMASTER
- OPERATIONAL IMPACTS: POSTPONING FARM UPGRADES, POSTPONING NEEDED EQUIPMENT PURCHASES, POSTPONING LIFE DECISIONS; POTENTIAL FOR BANKRUPTCY
- SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS WHO USE <100AF/YEAR (INCLUDING DE MINIMIS USERS) ACCOUNT FOR UNDER 3% OF GROUNDWATER USE IN THE CUYAMA VALLEY, WHICH IS WITHIN THE WATER MODEL'S MARGIN OF ERROR
- CURRENTLY, PUMPING REDUCTIONS ARE NOT PROPORTIONATE TO USE. THUS, A 60% REDUCTION TO BRING THE BASIN INTO BALANCE IS APPLIED EQUALLY TO ALL PUMPERS IN THE CENTRAL MANAGEMENT AREA (THE PRIMARY REGION OF OVERDRAFT), PLACING A DISPROPORTIONATE BURDEN ON THOSE WHO DID/DO NOT MATERIALLY CONTRIBUTE TO THE CRITICAL OVERDRAFT.

IMPACT OF ADJUDICATION ON SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS

- TWO LARGEST GROWERS (GRIMMWAY FARMS AND BOLTHOUSE FARMS) AND ASSOCIATED LANDOWNERS FILED FOR ADJUDICATION IN AUGUST 2021. GRIMMWAY AND BOLTHOUSE FARMS DROPPED OUT IN 2023, LEAVING LANDOWNERS AS PLAINTIFFS
- ALL WELL OWNERS WITHIN THE CUYAMA BASIN BOUNDARY ARE REQUIRED TO RESPOND, WITH NO EXCEPTIONS FOR DE MINIMIS USERS
- PLAINTIFFS ARE SUING TO REQUIRE EQUAL PUMPING REDUCTIONS BASINWIDE DESPITE UNEQUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR CRITICAL OVERDRAFT
- LOW-RESOURCED SCHOOL DISTRICT (2 WELLS) REQUIRED TO RESPOND (HAVE SPENT \$30,000+ ON LEGAL REPRESENTATION)
- SMALL RESIDENTIAL WATER DISTRICT IMPOSED \$20 MONTHLY FEE ON ALL ~225 RATEPAYERS (WAS \$200/MO, NOW \$220/MO) TO FUND LEGAL REPRESENTATION UNTIL ADJUDICATION IS CONCLUDED

NOTES FROM THE FIELD: WHAT WE'VE LEARNED

- SGMA LACKS GUIDANCE TO CONSIDER THE IMPACTS OF GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT ON SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS; LEAVING THIS ISSUE UP TO “LOCAL CONTROL” IS NOT SUFFICIENT.
- DESPITE REQUIREMENTS TO CONSIDER SIX UNDESIRABLE RESULTS TO MANAGE TO ACHIEVE “SUSTAINABLE YIELD”, A GSA CAN EFFECTIVELY OPERATE AS IF MANAGING TO “SAFE YIELD”, AND CONSIDER ONLY GROUNDWATER LEVELS IN MANAGEMENT DECISIONS.
- SGMA LACKS GUIDANCE TO ADDRESS CONFLICTS OF INTEREST, PARTICULARLY IN THE EVENT OF ENTITIES THAT ARE REPRESENTED ON GSA BOARDS AND ARE ALSO PLAINTIFFS IN AN ADJUDICATION.
- AS A CRITICALLY OVERDRAFTED BASIN NOW IN ADJUDICATION, LOCAL STAKEHOLDERS—including SMALL-SCALE PUMPERS—FEAR THAT ADJUDICATION WILL PAVE OVER 10 YEARS OF WORK ON SGMA.



THANK YOU

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