LAND USE PLANNING and the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

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The Kern groundwater basin is un-judicated, therefore, the ability to provide domestic water service is limited only by the ability to drill and develop groundwater.
Water & Land Use Planning Nexus

• SGMA Requires completion of Groundwater Sustainability Plan (“GSP”) - January 31, 2020
  • GSP will identify and implement actions to achieve “sustainability” which is largely dependent upon the balancing of water supplies and demands.

• Counties/Cities strive to maximize economic growth........which is dependent upon a reliable water supply.

• In Kern County, land without a water supply has little economic value

IN AN OVERDRAFTED BASIN HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE SUSTAINABILITY WHILE SUPPORTING CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH?
DIFFICULT CHOICES??

A reliable and affordable water supply is critical for all users.
Water & Land Use Planning Nexus

**WATER: Communication & Coordination** with land use planning agencies in development of GSP.
- Outreach to all planning agencies in GSA boundaries.
- Workshops to discuss proposed GSP “tools” and approaches.
- Solicit input from land use planning agencies!

**LAND USE: Communication and Coordination** with GSA’s and inclusion of a water element in General Plan Update and other local planning documents.
- “Active” participation in GSP development
- Outreach to GSA’s in development & drafting of water element to planning documents.
- Solicit input from GSA’s
Water & Land Use Planning Potential Win-Win

• GSP Tools that are Win-Win
  • Conversion of low value agricultural lands to groundwater recharge areas
  • Water Markets
    • Incentivized conservation
    • Partnerships with planning agencies to ensure water supplies available for development?

• Planning Tools that are Win-Win
  • Consideration of a “Will-Serve” or other acknowledgement from GSA responsible for water prior to permit issuance.
  • Well permitting
  • Zoning
    • Alternative Energy
    • Habitat Conservation Banks
• SOLUTIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

A reliable and affordable water supply is critical for all users.
Can you reduce demand while supporting continued economic development?

THE GOOD

THE BAD

AND THE UGLY

Local Control  Demand Reduction?  Economic Impacts
Final Thoughts:

• SGMA came as the result of water and land use decisions being made independently
• SGMA appropriately links water and land use decisions
• Water is critical to a successful economic engine
  • Strategic Investments in infrastructure are needed
  • Legal/Policy adjustments are needed to balance social, economic & environmental needs for water