Agriculture and Sustainable Groundwater Management

- My focus - Lands with surface supplies (v. “white lands”) in San Joaquin Valley
- SGMA and Farmers
  - What is wanted: Sustainable surface supplies, i.e., Plan A – a pipe dream?
  - What is anticipated: Reluctant recognition of pumping limitations, i.e., Plan B
- Plan B brings about major land use implications, both existing and future
- Whether A or B or both, farmers also want a SGMA road map, i.e. the GSA rules
Rules: Cart Before the Horse?

• What are the GSA rules?
• Rules await:
  o Groundwater basin knowledge
  o The sustainability goal
  o Urban coordination – overlying, correlative v. appropriative, prescriptive rights
  o Allocation methodologies
  o Stakeholder vetting
SGMA Land Use Tools

The Challenges:

1) Reverse land use planning?
2) Basin conundrum - Plan B → one for all and all for one?

The Tools:

- Plan A – acquire surface water
- Plan B – restrict extractions
  - Permanent crop v row crop lands
  - Voluntary land retirement options
  - Couple fallowing with recharge
  - Couple fallowing with solar generation
  - Financial penalties
  - Storage accounts
  - Sell, lease groundwater allotments
Interim Land Value Realities

• Financial markets reacting
• Groupings:
  – Lands w/ local Sierra stream supplies
  – Lands with imported supplies
  – Lands in or near surface suppliers
  – Isolated lands with deep groundwater only

Land Value Changes – South San Joaquin Valley

Will GSP tools mitigate for sagging land values?