



A Tradition of Stewardship
A Commitment to Service

Napa County Department of Environmental
Management

Milliken-Sarco-Tulocay (MST) Groundwater Deficient Basin

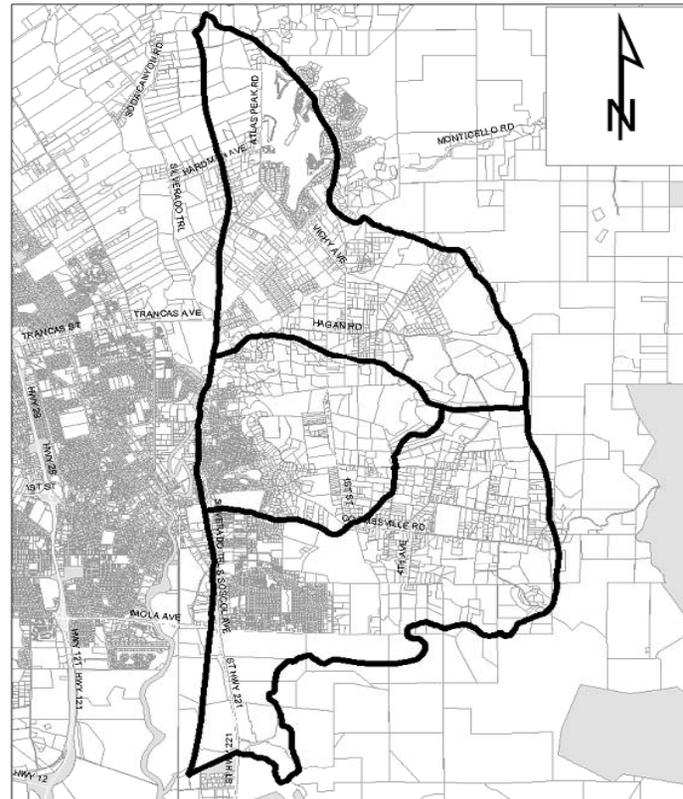
Presentation to GRAC
April 26, 2012



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The MST Boundaries:



Map 13-1: Milliken Sarco Tulocay Groundwater Deficient Basin



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“Houston, we have a problem.....”

- USGS studies for decades show declining groundwater levels
- 1999 BOS declares a ‘groundwater deficient basin’ and passes Groundwater Ordinance requiring permitting and metering of new uses and establishing “Fair Share”
- 2003 Latest USGS study shows decline continuing
- 2004 Planning adopts “no net increase” standard for discretionary permits under CEQA



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The Groundwater Ordinance

- Designed to slow the problem, not fix it
- Establishes “fair share” concept based on calculated recharge/#acres (0.3 acre ft/acre/yr)
- Only applies to new development (does not regulate existing uses)
- Requires discretionary permits for most new uses (allows a few ministerial uses)
- For most new projects, requires metering of wells, reports to the County and limits amount of water allowed to be withdrawn based on Fair Share



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CEQA Joins the Party

- Additional requirement of “no net increase” added in 2004 (following 2003 USGS Study) to stay under “cumulative impacts” requirement of CEQA
- Essentially any discretionary project that increases groundwater use by any amount is cumulatively significant and requires an EIR
- As a practical reality approvals grind to a halt (unless you have an existing water using activity you can give up for a new but different water using activity)



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So what can I do now?

Exempt

- Minor convenience improvements to an existing well system (repairs)
- Replace a failed well
- Expand the size of an existing dwelling (add bedrooms but not a second unit)

Ministerial

- A residence, if no other development exists on the parcel (limited to 0.6 acre ft/year no matter the size of the parcel)
- Replants



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Discretionary

- Everything else that uses groundwater

But, there are work arounds to facilitate
development:

- Trucked in water (only for Agricultural uses)
- Giving up one use to allow for another
- Reducing water use in one area of the parcel to support development in another



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Some Next Steps

- Recycled water pipeline
- Conservation education



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True or False?

- The 1999 GW ordinance was designed to “fix the problem”
- The County just keeps approving new vineyards in the MST
- You can’t get a permit to do anything in the MST
- People who are required to report their usage never do
- The vineyards are the real problem
- The golf courses are the real problem
- The residences are the real problem
- The MST pipeline for recycled water will fix everything

Questions?