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# Water Resources and Management in Ventura County

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## Part II

### Water Resources: Governance

February 28, 2023

# Why Water is an Increasing Concern

- ◆ Demands in Ventura County are approaching available supplies
  - ◆ In some areas demand exceed supply
- ◆ New controls on supplies
  - ◆ Environmental issues
    - ◆ Fish passage
    - ◆ Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems
  - ◆ Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
  - ◆ Drought impacts
- ◆ County adaption strategy: Increase supply and decrease demand

# Overview

- ◆ Recap first presentation
- ◆ Governance
  - ◆ California constitution
  - ◆ Water rights
  - ◆ Regulators and regulations
  - ◆ Ventura County
  - ◆ Local associations and coordination efforts

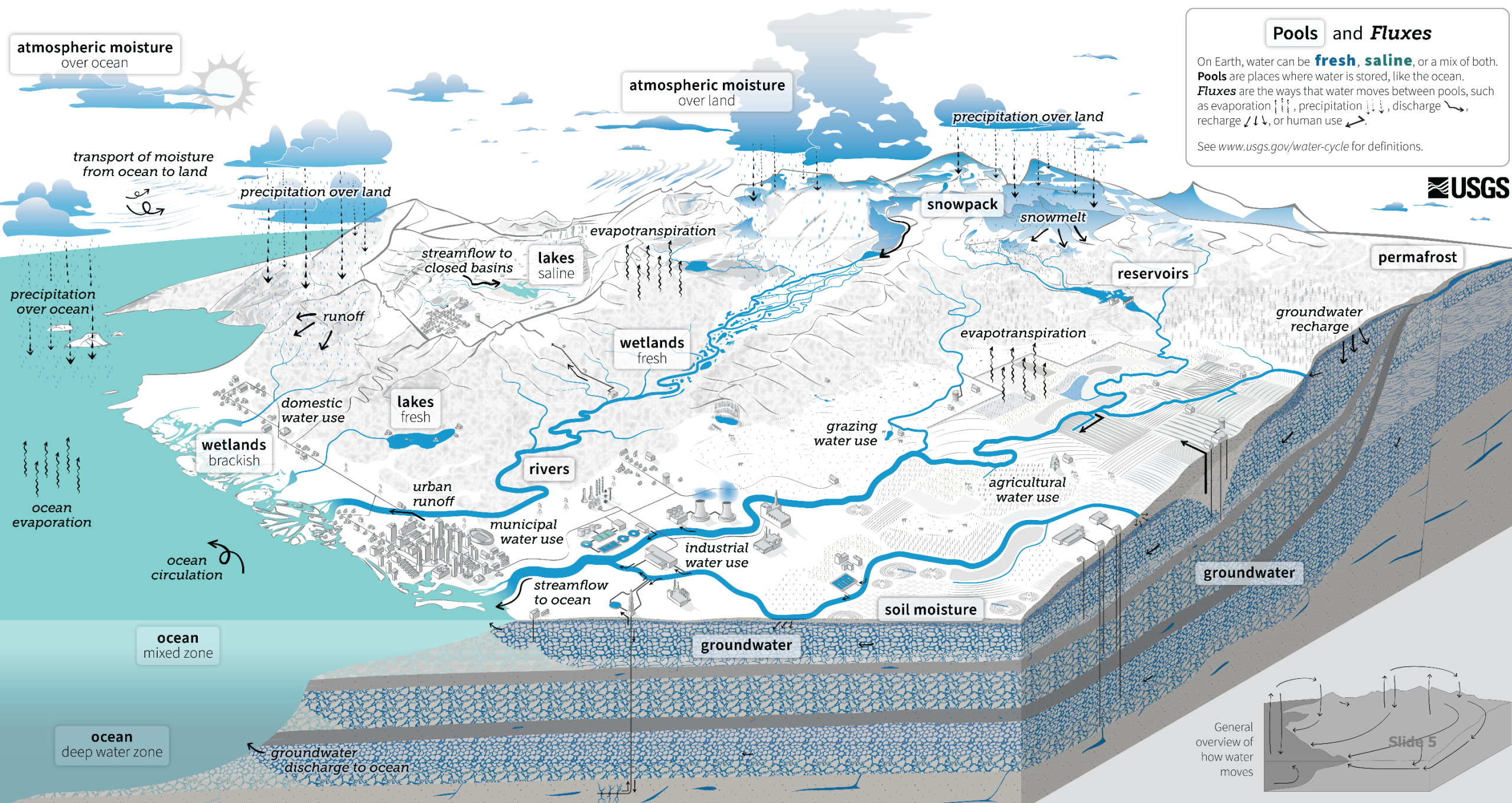
# Recap First Presentation – July 26, 2022

- ◆ Hydrologic Cycle
- ◆ Watersheds
- ◆ Water supply and demand
- ◆ Water wholesalers and retailers
- ◆ Groundwater

## Pools and Fluxes

On Earth, water can be **fresh**, **saline**, or a mix of both. **Pools** are places where water is stored, like the ocean. **Fluxes** are the ways that water moves between pools, such as evaporation ↑↑↑, precipitation ↓↓↓, discharge ↘, recharge ↙↙, or human use ↘.

See [www.usgs.gov/water-cycle](http://www.usgs.gov/water-cycle) for definitions.



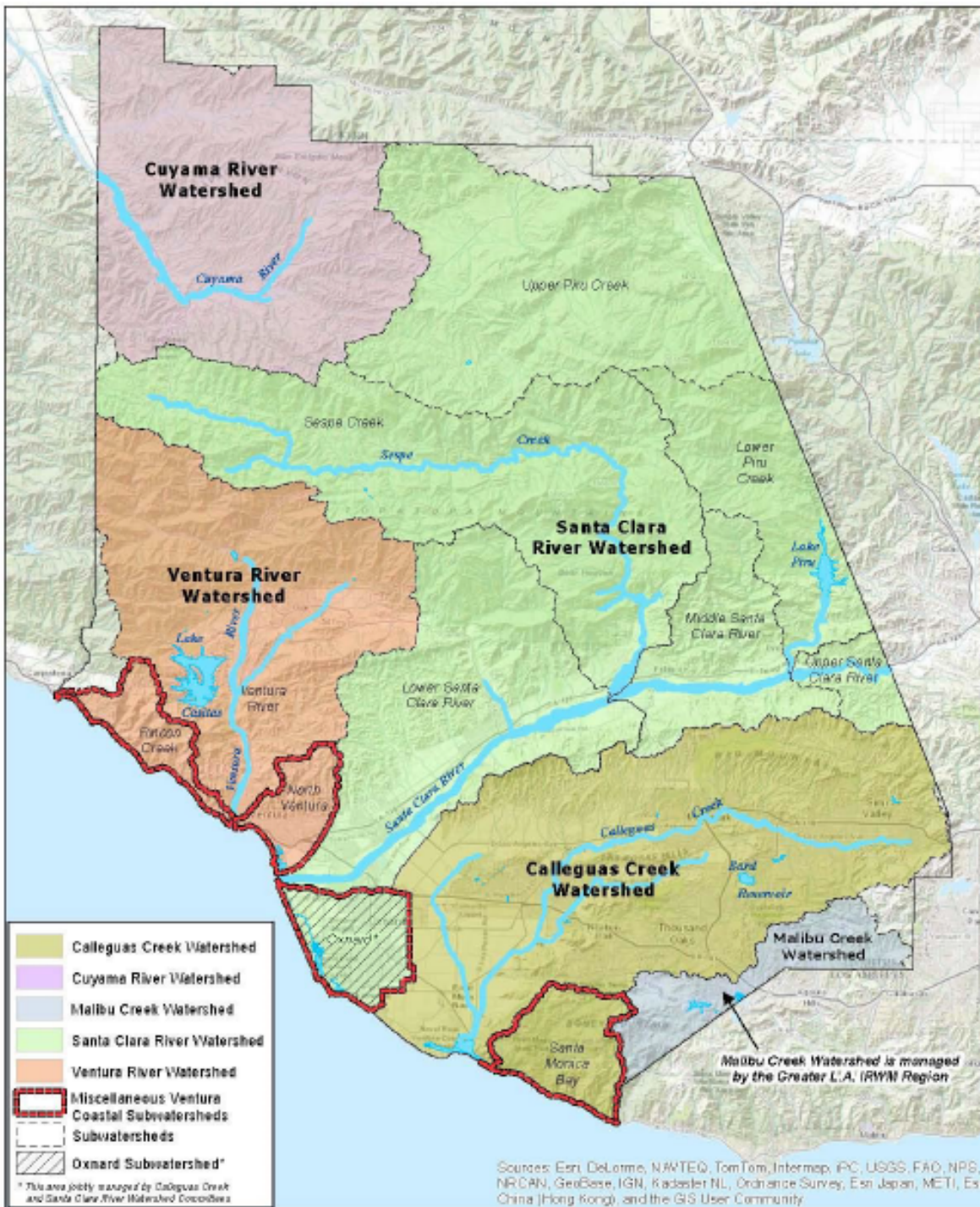
General overview of how water moves

Slide 5



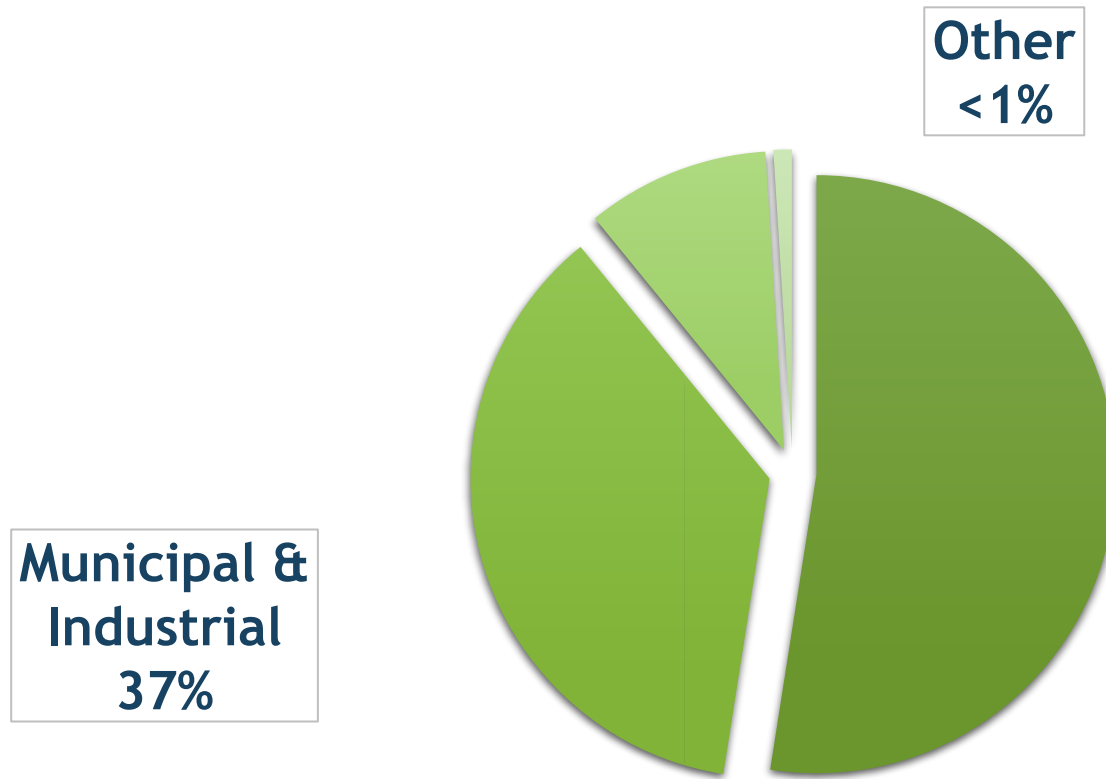
# VC Watersheds

- Major Watersheds
  - Ventura River
  - Santa Clara River
  - Calleguas Creek
- Minor Watersheds
  - Cuyama River
  - Malibu Creek
  - Coastal



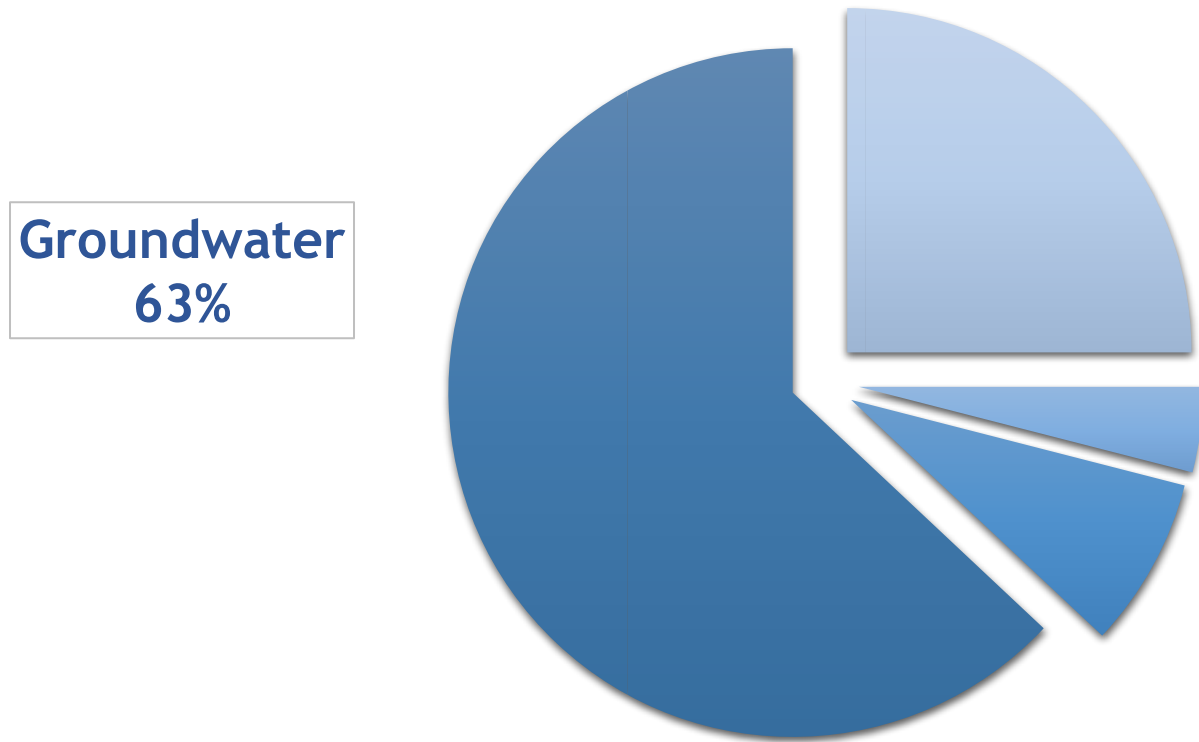
# Water Supply and Demand Study 2020

## Countywide Water Demand by Sector



# Water Supply and Demand Study 2020

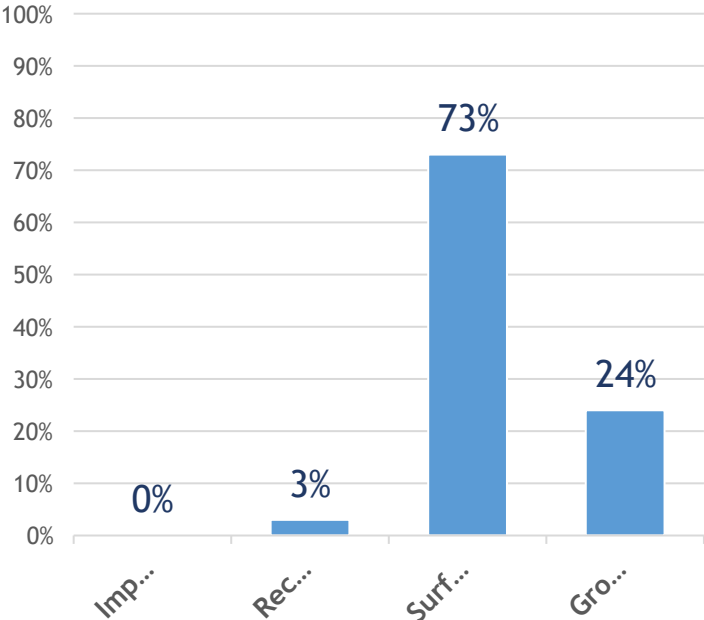
## Countywide Water Supplies by Source



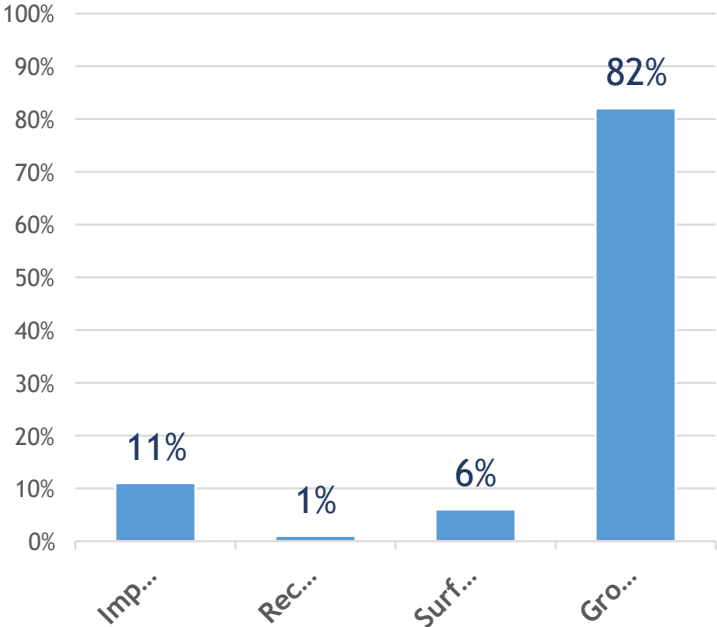


# Water Supply by Watershed

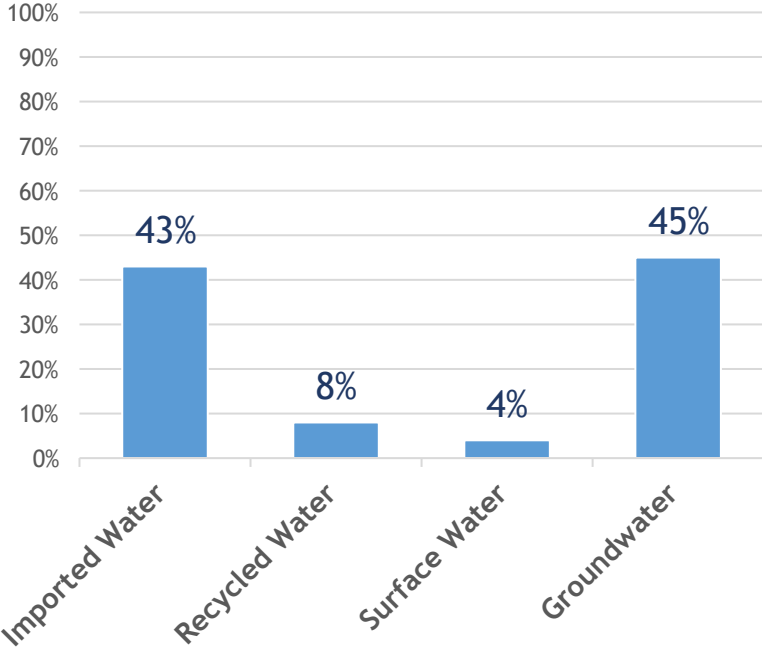
Ventura River Watershed



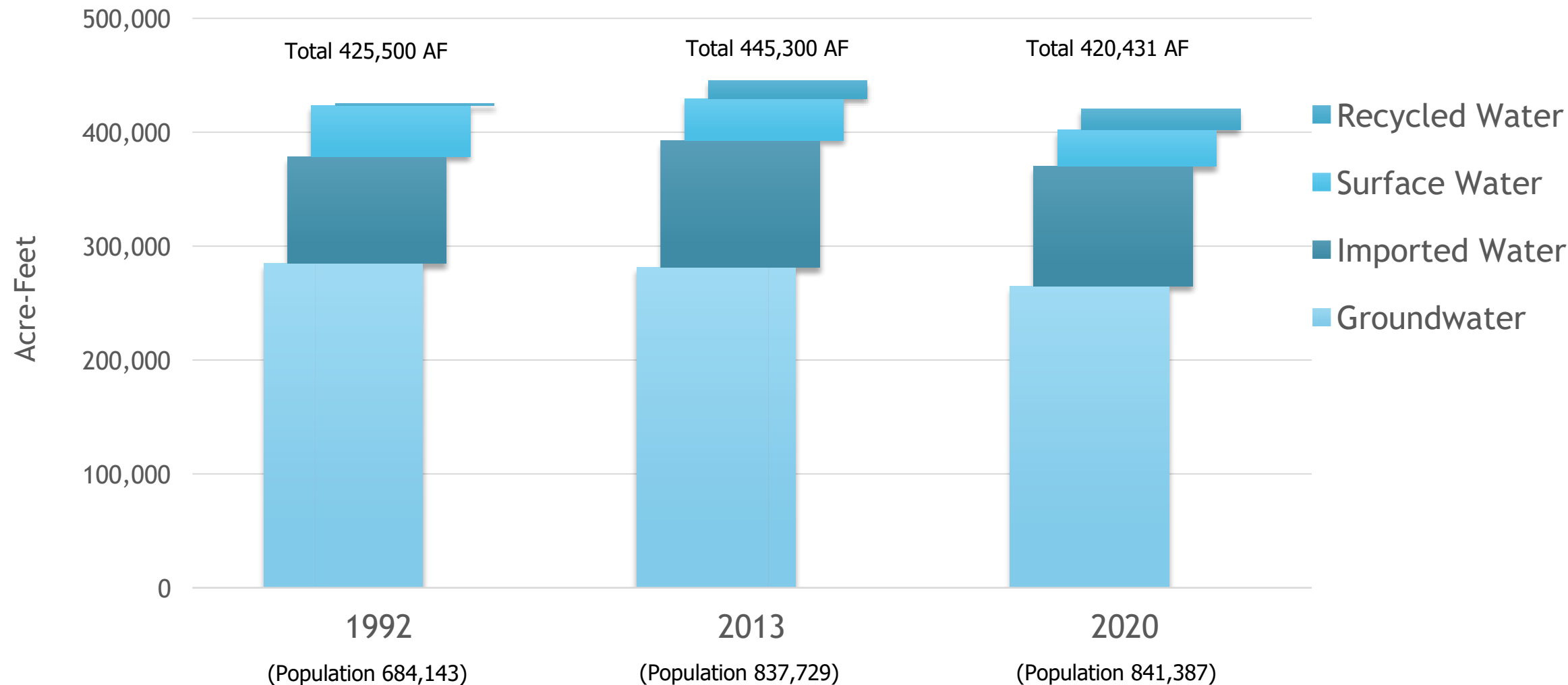
Santa Clara River Watershed



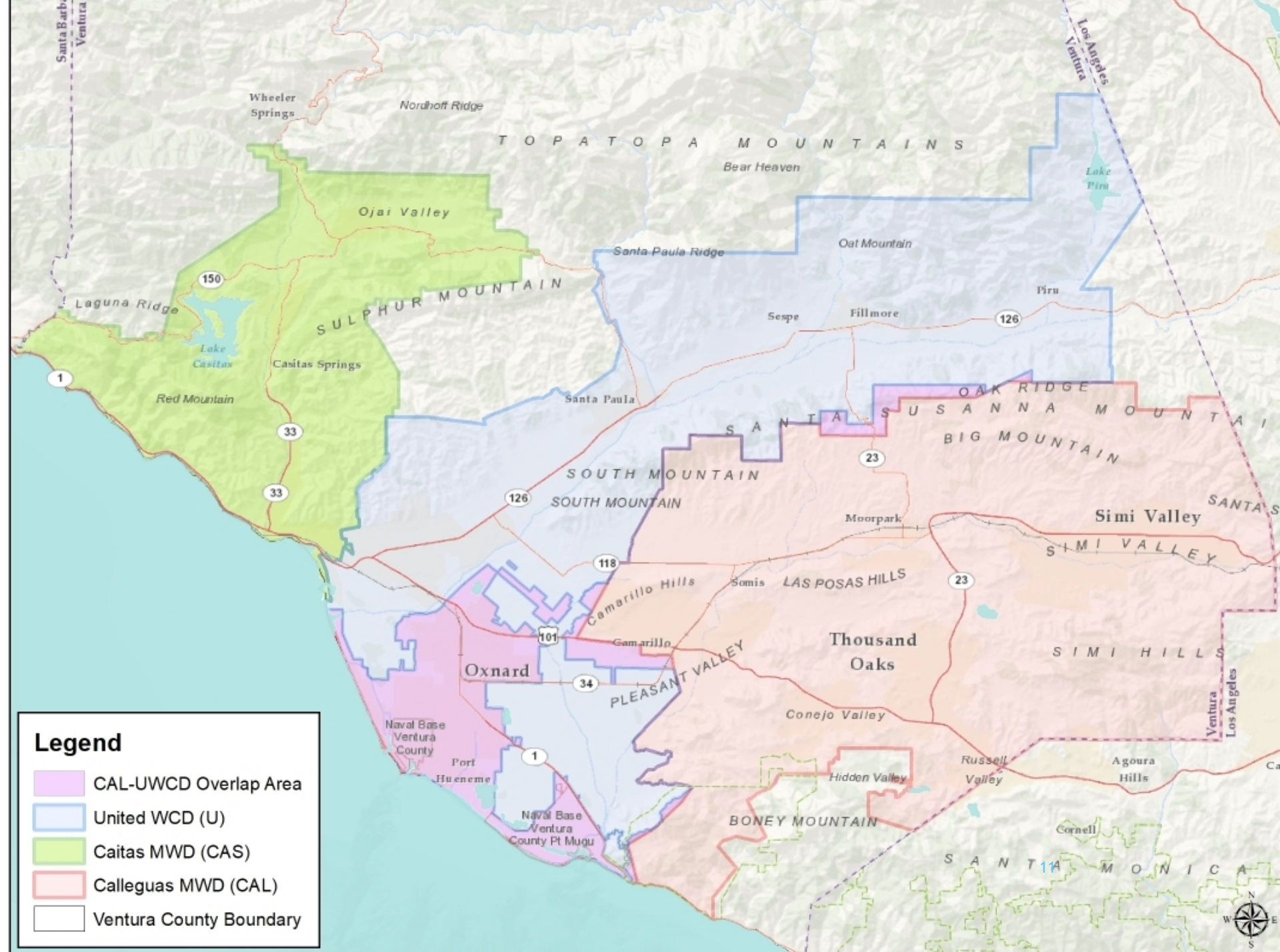
Calleguas Creek Watershed



# Countywide Water Sources Over Time

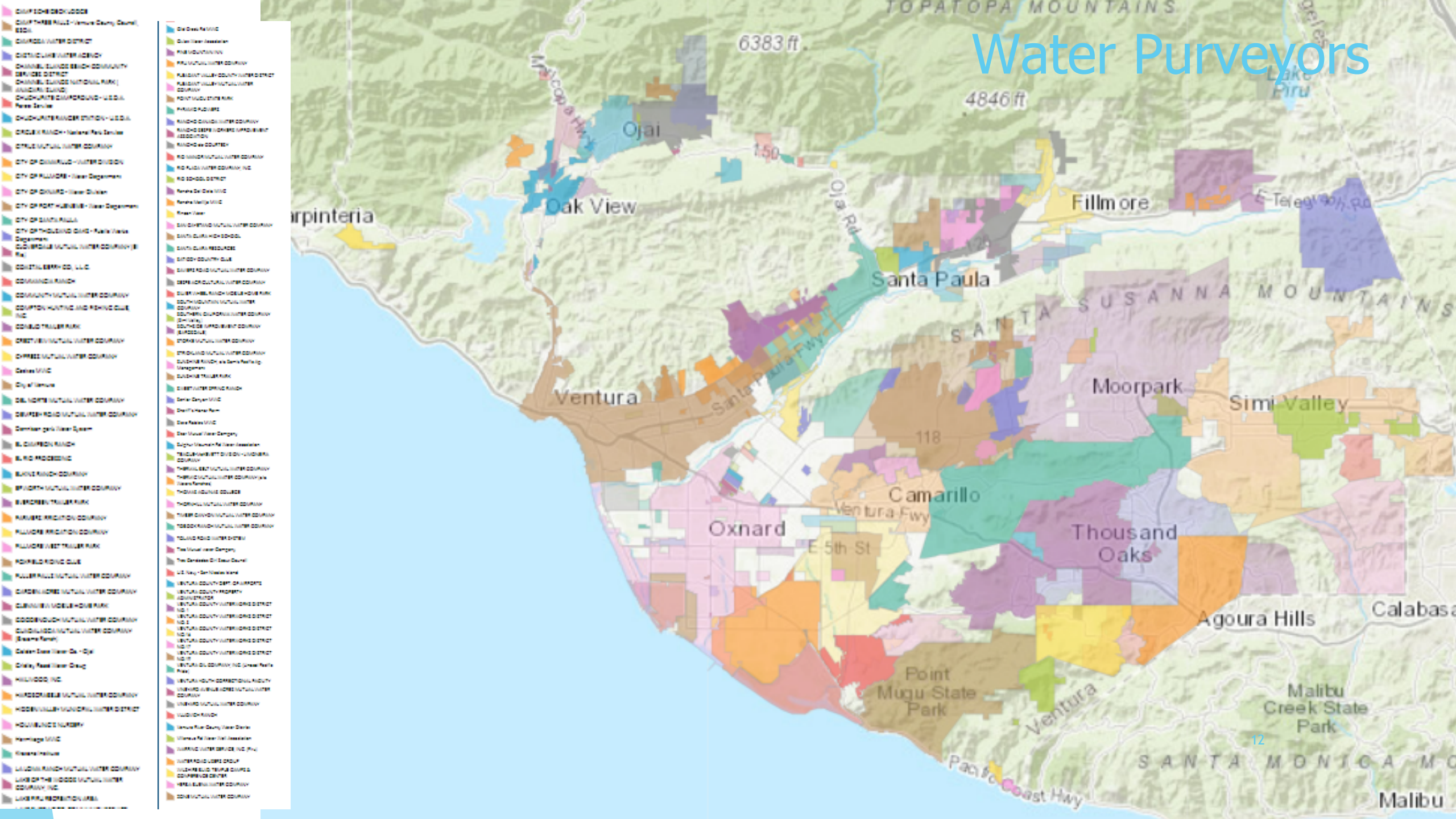


# Water Wholesalers

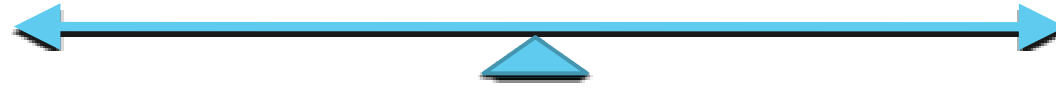




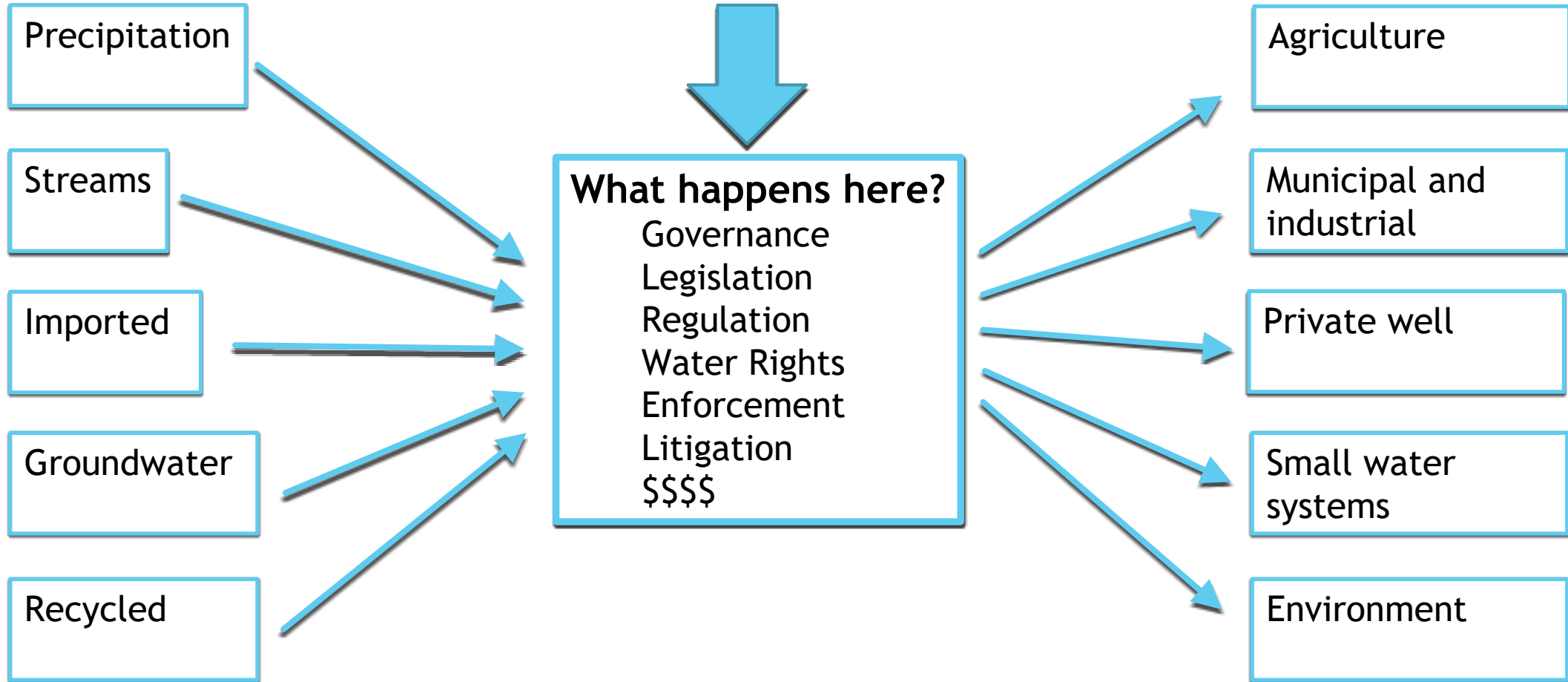
# Water Purveyors



# Supply



# Demand





# This Second BOS Presentation – Governance

- ◆ California Constitution - “reasonable and beneficial”
  - ◆ Water rights
  - ◆ Water quality
- ◆ Regulations and Regulators
- ◆ Ventura County - Land Use
  - ◆ General Plan
  - ◆ SOAR
  - ◆ Conditions of development
- ◆ Watershed Protection District
  - ◆ Enabling legislation includes powers “to store water, to conserve and reclaim water, to appropriate and acquire water and water rights, to import water . . .”
- ◆ Sustainable Groundwater Management Act
  - ◆ Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
- ◆ Local Committees and Associations
- ◆ Drought restrictions

# California Constitution - “Reasonable and Beneficial”

- ◆ Article X, Section 2 - Reasonable and Beneficial Use
- ◆ Water Rights:
  - ◆ Public Trust Doctrine: requires states to manage certain natural resources for the benefit of the public
  - ◆ “right does not and shall not extend to the waste or unreasonable use or method of use or unreasonable method of diversion of water”

# California Constitution - “Reasonable and Beneficial”

- ◆ Requires that all water use be both “reasonable and beneficial”
  - ◆ Beneficial
    - ◆ irrigation, domestic, municipal and industrial,
    - ◆ hydroelectric power,
    - ◆ recreational use,
    - ◆ habitat
  - ◆ Reasonable - should not deprive other users from correlative enjoyment of the resource
    - ◆ Not waste or overuse, e.g. non-recirculating fountains, excessive irrigation practices (race to pumphouse)
    - ◆ State Supreme Court: determined by the circumstances, “but varies as the current situation changes.”
    - ◆ **Droughts can change the definition of reasonable use**

# Water Rights

- ◆ Definition: Legal permission to use a reasonable amount of water for a beneficial purpose such as swimming, fishing, farming or industry.
  - ◆ Often determined by courts (or settled by parties)
  - ◆ Surface water administered by the State Water Resources Control Board
  - ◆ Groundwater is a property right
    - ◆ Adjudication - courts determine water rights
    - ◆ Adjudications have been filed in many basins post SGMA
- ◆ Rights must be perfected. Process requires notice, and taking and putting water to beneficial use
  - ◆ Permit/license from State Water Board or court needed

# Water Rights

- ◆ Overlyers – water comes from connection between land and water
- ◆ Appropriators - uses water without direct connection between land and water
- ◆ Prescriptive right - acquired through adverse possession of someone else's water right (e.g. squatter's rights)





# Regulation by Type of Water - **Surface Water**

- ◆ Surface Water
  - ◆ Water rights - SWRCB
  - ◆ Water quality - RWQCB
    - ◆ NPDES discharge permits
      - ◆ Wastewater treatment plant discharge
      - ◆ MS4 activities (Stormwater Permit)
    - ◆ Irrigated Agricultural Land Discharge Permitting (ag waiver)
    - ◆ Water Quality Certification and Wetlands

# Regulation by Type of Water - **Groundwater**

- ◆ Groundwater
  - ◆ Sustainability (quantity)
    - ◆ Department Water Resources
    - ◆ Groundwater Sustainability Agencies
  - ◆ Water quality – protection and cleanup
    - ◆ RWQCB
      - ◆ Land disposal/Composting facilities
      - ◆ Underground storage tanks

# Regulation by Type of Water – Drinking Water

- ◆ Water Works Manual
- ◆ Purveyors with more than 25 connections
  - ◆ SWRCB
    - ◆ Division of Drinking Water
      - ◆ Water wholesalers
      - ◆ Groundwater wholesalers
- ◆ Purveyors with less than 25 connections
  - ◆ County of Ventura Environmental Health Division

# California Department of Water Resources

- ◆ Infrastructure
  - ◆ State Water Project and reservoirs
- ◆ Sustainability
  - ◆ SGMA
  - ◆ California Water Plan
- ◆ Water storage and supply
- ◆ Hydroelectric power
- ◆ Flood preparedness
- ◆ Dam safety

# State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)

- ◆ Administers Surface Water Rights
- ◆ Water Quality through RWQCB
  - ◆ NPDES - Stormwater
  - ◆ TMDLs
  - ◆ Groundwater cleanup
- ◆ Drinking water:
  - ◆ Division of Drinking Water

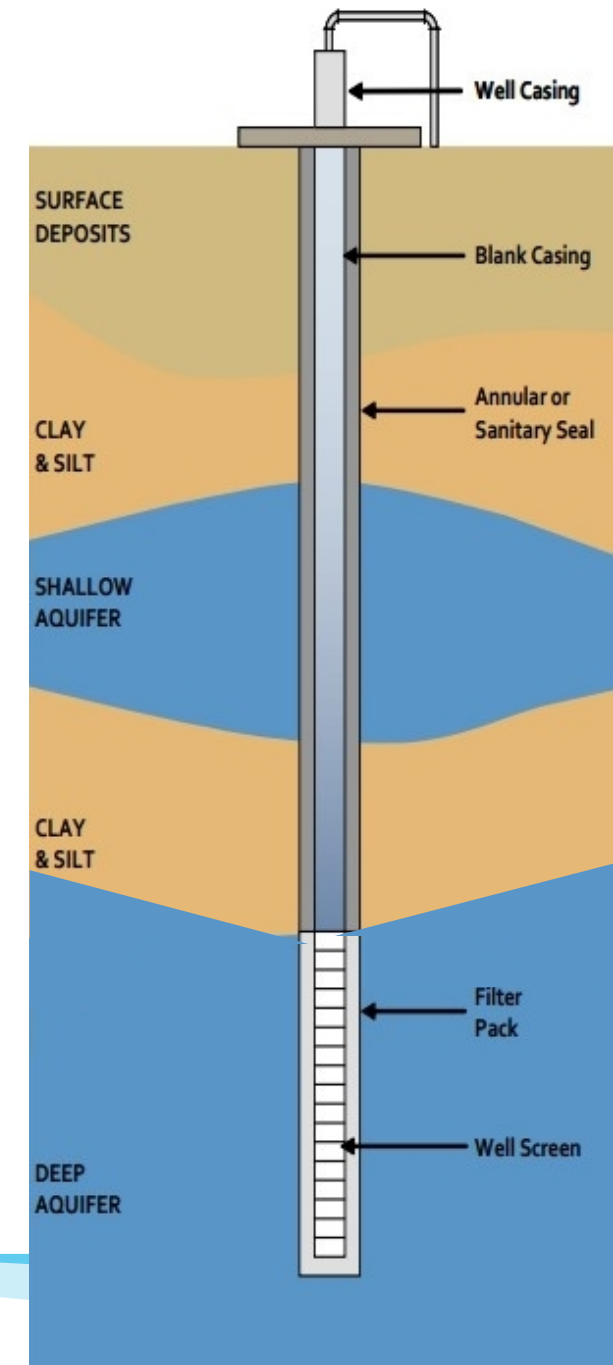


# Ventura County - County Land Use

- ◆ County General Plan elements impacting water
  - ◆ Land use
  - ◆ Conservation
  - ◆ Open Space
  - ◆ Environmental Justice
  - ◆ Water Resources Element
    - ◆ Water Supply
    - ◆ Water Quality
    - ◆ Water Conservation and Reuse
    - ◆ Groundwater Watershed Management
    - ◆ Water for Agriculture
    - ◆ Water for the Environment
- ◆ Save Open Space and Agricultural Resources (SOAR)
- ◆ Conditions of Development
  - ◆ Requirements – Initial Study Assessment Guidelines (ISAGs)

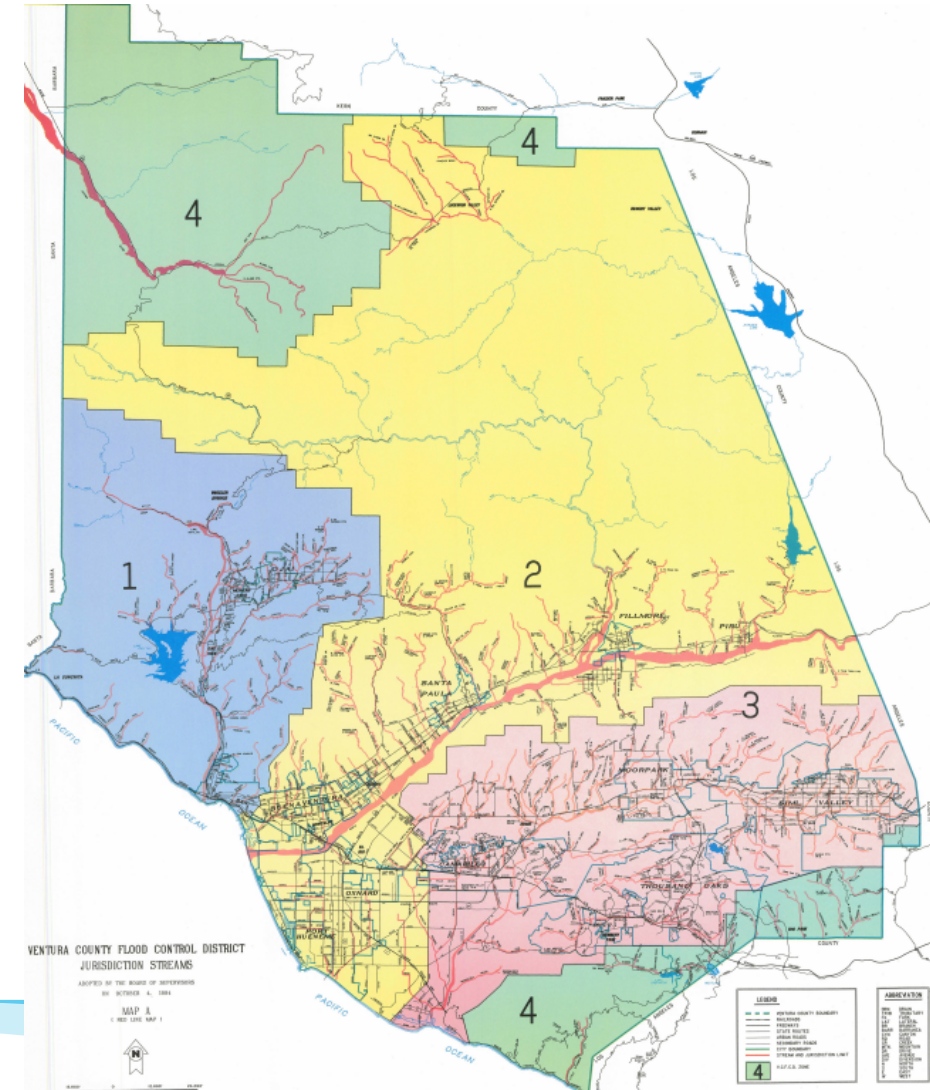
# County Well Ordinance (not oil)

- ◆ ONLY provides protection from potential contamination sources
- ◆ Enacted 1980 and administered by Ventura County PWA-WP
- ◆ Covers
  - ◆ unincorporated areas
  - ◆ all the Cities except Oxnard
- ◆ All types of water wells
  - ◆ not oil wells
  - ◆ not just water production wells



# Ventura County Watershed Protection District

- ◆ Established in 1944 as Ventura County Flood Control District
- ◆ Revised in 2003, renamed Ventura County Watershed Protection District
- ◆ Powers include:
  - ◆ To store water in surface or underground reservoirs.
  - ◆ To conserve and reclaim water for present and future use within the district.
  - ◆ To appropriate and acquire water and water rights, and import water into the district, and
  - ◆ To conserve within or outside of the district, same for any useful purpose to the district.



# State Legislation

- ◆ Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA)
- ◆ Ventura County Watershed Protection Act
  - ◆ California Water Code Appendix, Chapter 46
- ◆ Drought and water conservation legislation in progress
  - ◆ Outdoor uses, and non-functional turf
  - ◆ Indoor residential
  - ◆ Water loss by purveyors
- ◆ Governor's Emergency Order Authority

# Sustainable Groundwater Management Act

- ◆ No modification of water rights
- ◆ Local control over state control
- ◆ New Stakeholders
  - ◆ Environmental needs
  - ◆ Land use authority
- ◆ Both increases in supply, and demand reductions



Ventura County Groundwater Philosophy:  
Balanced representation, transparency,  
regional perspective



# Ventura County Groundwater Basins Managed Under SGMA

# Carpinteria

# Cuyama Valley

# Ojai Valley

# Upper Ventura River Valley

# Santa Clara River Valley East

# Fillmore

# Piru

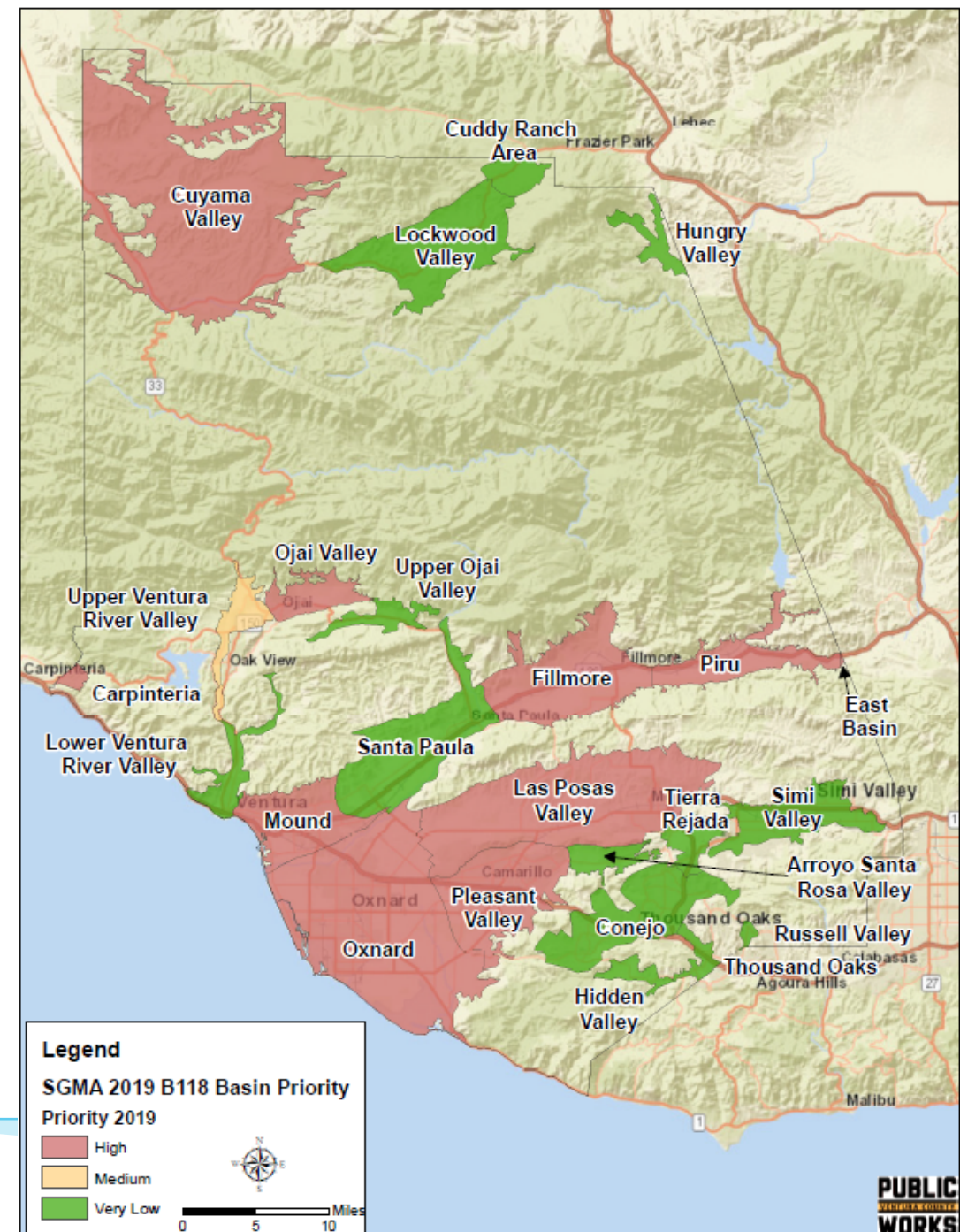
# Mound

# Arroyo Santa Rosa Valley

# Las Posas Valley

# Pleasant Valley

# Oxnard



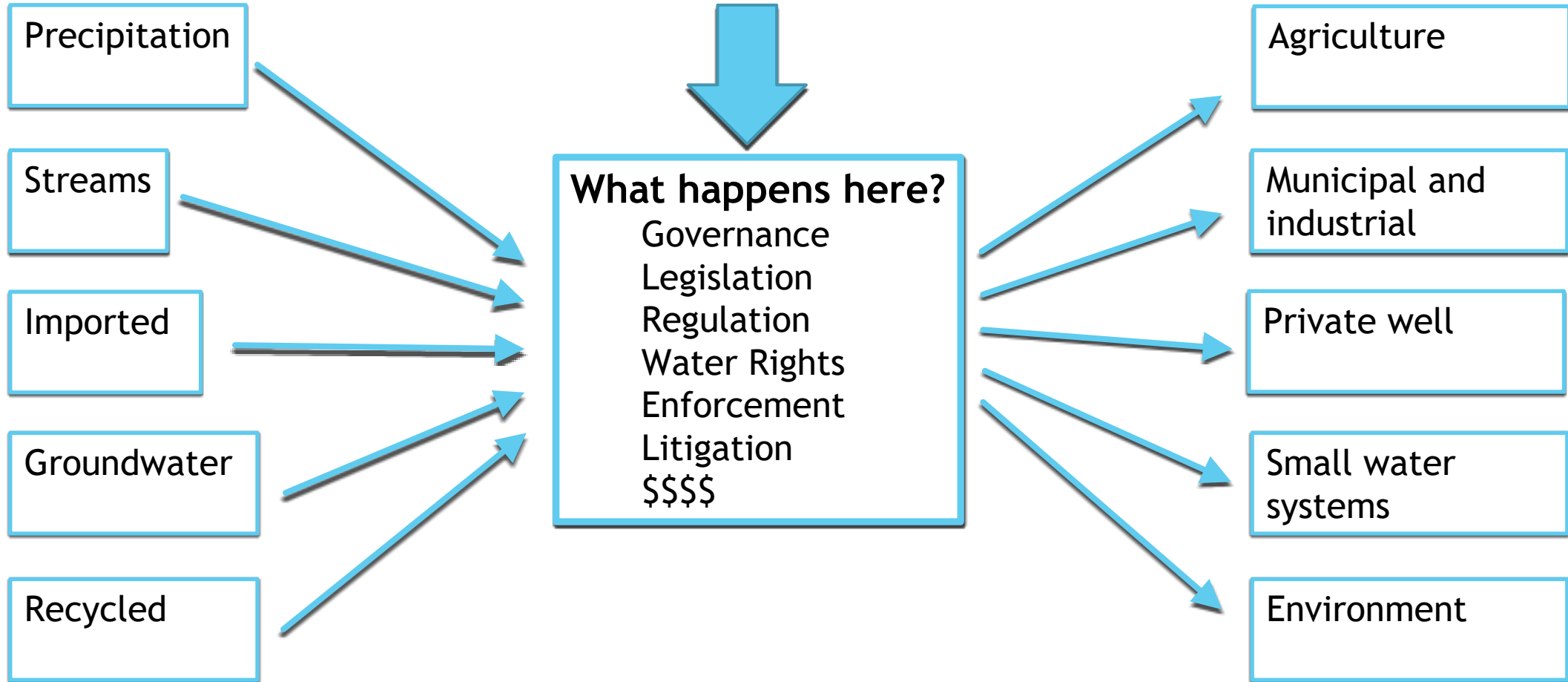
# Local associations and coordination efforts

- ◆ Association of Water Agencies of Ventura County (AWA)
- ◆ Integrated Regional Watershed Management (IRWM)
- ◆ Watershed Committees
- ◆ Calleguas purveyors' group
- ◆ Stakeholder organizations
  - ◆ Farm Bureau
  - ◆ COLAB
  - ◆ Land Conservancies (TNC, OVLC, Ventura Lands Trust)
  - ◆ NGOs

# Supply



# Demand



# Third BOS Presentation – Ventura County

## Major Water Issues

- ◆ Economic Vitality
  - ◆ Agriculture
  - ◆ Land use/SOAR
  - ◆ Oil/gas industry
- ◆ Quality of Life
- ◆ Public Health and Safety
- ◆ Water Quality
- ◆ Disadvantaged Communities

# Fourth BOS Presentation – Stormwater Permit

- ◆ Stormwater Permit Requirements:
  - ◆ Watershed Management Program
  - ◆ Capital Improvement Projects
  - ◆ Monitoring
- ◆ Countywide Coordination and Implementation Agreement
- ◆ Costs and Resources
- ◆ External drivers - Drought
- ◆ Education and Outreach



# Questions

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Ventura County

February 28, 2023