

# Supplemental EIR for County Wide Water Program

## Summary of Scoping Meeting Comments

The following is a summary of comments received and/or questions asked by the public at the EIR Scoping Meeting for the proposed Water Neutral New Development and Agricultural Water Waste Prevention Ordinances held on August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2014. This information has been passed along to the EIR consultant for consideration as the Draft EIR is prepared.

### Potential Impacts:

- Erosion on abandoned acreage, and/or return of noxious weeds
  - Need to require: restore natives, return to grassland, remove fencing to allow wildlife to return
- If land is not restored it becomes “dead” land, no longer a carbon sink
- Growing crops is another form of land use. Changing them is significant. If we don’t grow alfalfa anymore we will have to import it. This all will change the landscape. We need to include some of those things when analyzing landscape impacts.

### Potential Alternatives:

- Make sure you’re comprehensive in your alternatives. Because we’ve seen how if down the road we want to change we can’t because it wasn’t listed as an alternative.
- Water storage – Large storage system funded by the County for when it does rain
- Sharing water – Those of us who have deep wells can contribute to a County-run water share program. We’ve invested in these wells already and shouldn’t be penalized.
- Desalination. Take into account the cost of lost agriculture before dismissing this as too expensive.

### Economic Concerns (Economic impacts of a project are only subject to CEQA if those impacts cause physical impacts):

- What about impacts on jobs? When we shift from 1 crop to another, we have an economic impact.
- Is there an analysis of economic impacts? Can we weigh the cost of lost economic potential vs. the cost of big water projects? If you’re dismissing alternatives based on cost, you should also have to analyze cost of the project in terms of economic impact.
- If we can’t use the land, we can’t hire people to work the land, and we lose jobs.

### Policy Concerns :

- Longevity of the ordinances
  - Will a water district be subject to the regulations
  - What if we get out of LOS 3?

- Could this impact Atascadero sub-basin?
- Administration of the Ag Water offset program developed by the RCD for the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin Area
  - Will the County or 3<sup>rd</sup> party be administering the program?
  - How will it be monitored?
- Equity
  - Why not allow the same amount of water use regardless of acreage and what is currently planted? Why does existing ag have priority?
  - Burden on future generations who cannot afford the high cost to plant
- Timing
  - Why can't we analyze the RCD program once it is in place and the public works study before we move forward with this?
  - Why are we only focusing on PRGWB, we need to be proactive and save water everywhere?
- Water Waste Prevention Ordinance
  - Can the name be "Water Use" Ordinance?
  - Blanket rules won't work. Things are different from place to place