SCAC Wip update for 11/28/11, by John Snyder

NCSD supplemental water misrepresentation

Please note: NCSD mixes up a lot of data and math, such as calendar years and water years and that has not been adjusted for in this overview.

Letter to the Editor:

NCSD supplemental water misrepresentation.

   NCSD presentations on 8/23 and 11/9, claimed Nipomo is pumping twice the dependable yield (or supply).

   NCSD claims “experts say” and present a “photoshopped” slide which shows a Production (pumping) vs Supply shortage for the last 27 years.

   Add up the shortage for the 27 years and there should be about 100,000 AF less water underground.

   Then they show a slide that has only the last 10 years of an "average water level". It shows a decline. Which they claim is because of increased development.

   The real graph goes to 1975 and shows water in storage changing with changes in rainfall.

   The water in storage does not show a 100,000 AF drop expected from the “photoshopped” slide.

   On top of that NCSD talks about the last two years being above average rainfall, but fail to mention that their rainfall numbers shows below average rainfall for the last 27 years. One would expect an even lower amount of water in storage from that.

   In short the data does not show the alleged 100,000 AF shortage.


   Remember NCSD claims the WIP project can be built in less then two years. Existing customers can all vote No now.

   When we are more certain a real problem is developing in the future, the pipeline can be built in time to prevent seawater intrusion.

   Every year we wait we save millions of dollars.

   John Snyder
NCSD supplemental water misrepresentation with graphs:

**NCSD presentations on 8/23 and 11/9, claimed Nipomo is pumping twice the dependable yield (or supply):**

NCSD presentation 8/23/11 Power Point slide #23 of Pumping Demand and "Dependable Yield" or "Supply" (1975-2008):

**NCSD claims “experts say” and present a “photoshopped” slide which shows a Production (pumping) vs Supply shortage for the last 27 years:**

The chart from the NMMA TG was made into a slide that was "photo-shopped" to add a DWR "Dependable Yield" taken out of context:

The real source of "Pumping" data is the Nipomo Mesa Management Area Technical Group (NMMA TG) report, 2009 Page 39:

"Estimated Groundwater Production" was updated in the Nipomo Mesa Management Area Technical Group (NMMA TG) report, 2010 Page 32:

Because subsurface flows to the ocean could be reduced and subsurface flows between the portions of the basin increased or decreased, the dependable yield values in Table 29 can be conservatively increased. Thus, the dependable yield for each portion of the main basin is given as a range. The dependable yield is estimated to range between 4,000 and 5,600 AF for the Tri-Cities Mesa - Arroyo Grande Plain portion of the basin, between 4,800 and 6,000 AF for the Nipomo Mesa portion of the basin, and between 11,100 and 13,000 AF for the Santa Maria Valley portion of the basin. These estimates of dependable yield for each portion of the main groundwater basin are more meaningful if they are considered as a unified whole because the estimates are directly affected by the amounts and nature of the subsurface flows occurring between portions of the basin. Thus, the dependable yield for the main Santa Maria Basin within San Luis Obispo County ranges between 19,900 and 24,600 AF.

During the course of this study, it became apparent that better data are needed to determine stream infiltration, deep percolation of precipitation, and groundwater extractions. Information is also needed that would assist in understanding the role of the Santa Maria River, Oceano, and Wilmar Avenue faults on subsurface flows. The resulting improvement in the estimated amounts of the items of water supply and use will, in turn, improve the estimates of dependable yield.

Add up the shortage for the 27 years and there should be about 100,000 AF less water underground:

The data from the real chart can then be used to add up the shortage from 1984 to 2011.

The data from the chart "Estimated Groundwater Production" was updated in the Nipomo Mesa Management Area Technical Group (NMMA TG) report, 2010 Page 32, but there is no source published for those numbers. The NMMA TG has meetings that the public cannot attend and the methods and source of its work cannot be acquired by the public record acts.

But a good estimate can be made by taking the chart and enlarging it estimating the "Production" for each year.

Then they show a slide that has only the last 10 years of an "average water level". It shows a decline. Which they claim is because of increased development:

NCSD selective cut the data to make it look like there is a declining water table as a result of Urban use.

NCSD presentation 8/23/11 Power Point slide #16 of "Average" Water Levels (2000-2010):

Average Water Levels in Key Wells

Key Well Index dropped 40% between 2000 and 2008
The real graph goes to 1975 and shows water in storage changing with changes in rainfall:

NCSD "Expert" Brad Newton Technical Memorandum Spring 2011 "Groundwater in Storage" (now called "Groundwater Index"). Note the red line for just the last 10 years is the source of the cut data for the NCSD slide on water levels

The water in storage does not show a 100,000 AF drop expected from the "photoshopped" slide:

One should expect that the accumulated shortage shown in the Production vs Supply slide of 100,000 AF would result in a groundwater in storage that is 100,000 AF less than the start of the shortage in 1984.

1984 Fall level of 76,000 AF - 100,000 AF = -24,000 AF

The 1984 spring level is missing, the 1985 level of 106,000 AF - 100,000 AF = 6,000 AF

Clearly the water levels and water in storage are no where near what the NCSD alleged the shortage would require.

Water in storage is about the same given the below average rainfall of 15.8" out of a 16.5" average.

In short the NCSD data does not show the alleged 100,000 AF shortage.