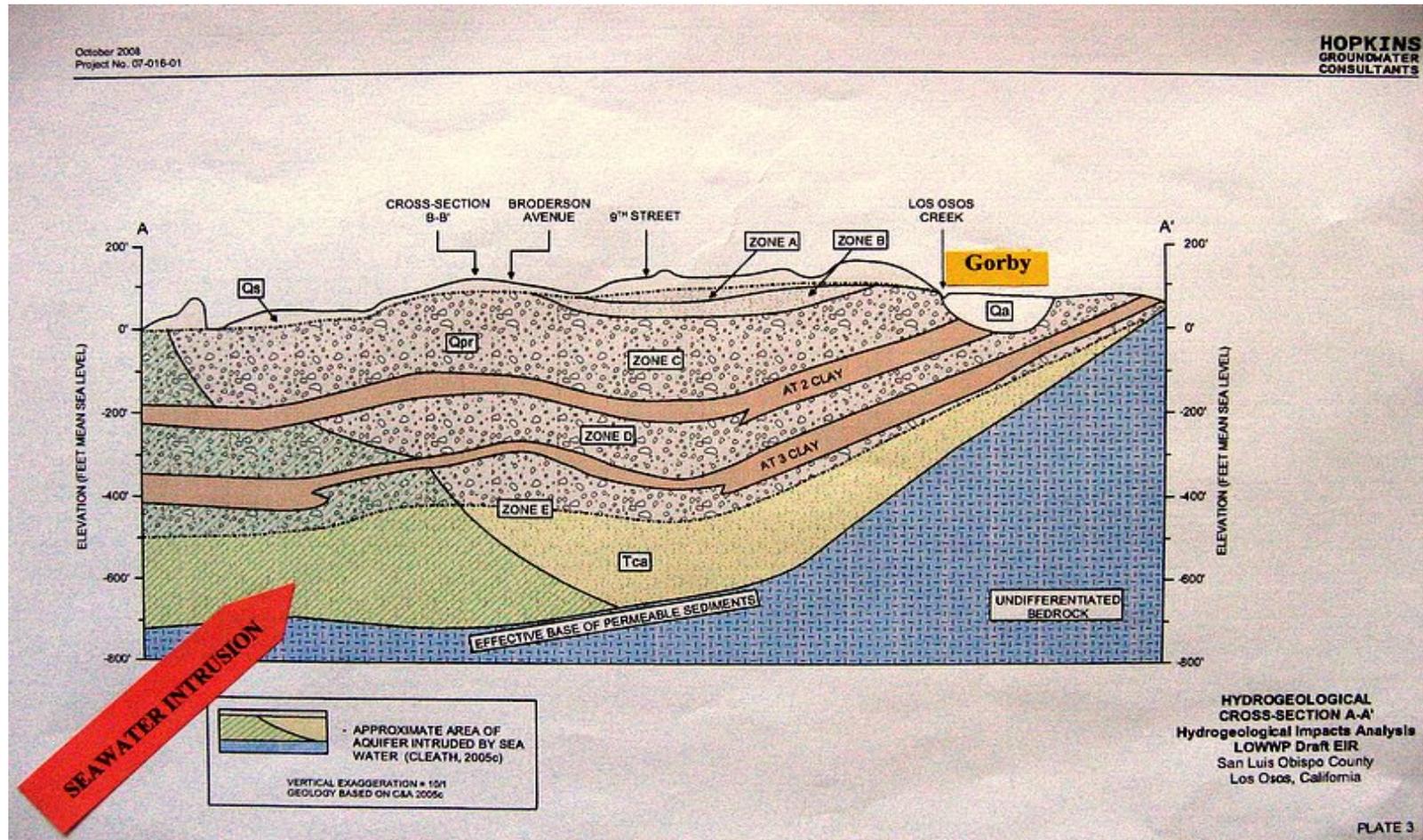


Saturday, April 4, 2009

**San Luis Obispo Flood Control
and Wastewater Conservation District
Water Resource Committee**

Consideration of Los Osos Wastewater Project

Cross Section-Los Osos Groundwater Basin



Impacts to Basin From Historical Use of Septic Systems

- Over 70% of the domestic water supply in Los Osos is extracted from lower basin strata.
- Groundwater level in upper basin has risen nearly 1 ft/yr for the past 30 years.
- Nitrate levels increased in upper basin until 1988 moratorium.
- Seawater wedge is migrating into the lower basin strata.
- San Luis County has certified a Level III Severity for the Los Osos groundwater basin.

San Luis Obispo County Preferred Project at Tonini Ranch is Flawed

- Includes disposal of approx. 750,000 gals/day of treated effluent via spray field and evaporation on 262 acres.
- Clay soils at Tonini site do not allow percolation.
- Groundwater at Tonini is shallow.
- Spray fields may operate only during day time periods when there is no rain, fog, wind or its not too cold.
- Tonini has numerous surface drainage features which constrains use of site for spraying and are potential conduits for treated effluent to reach Morro Bay.

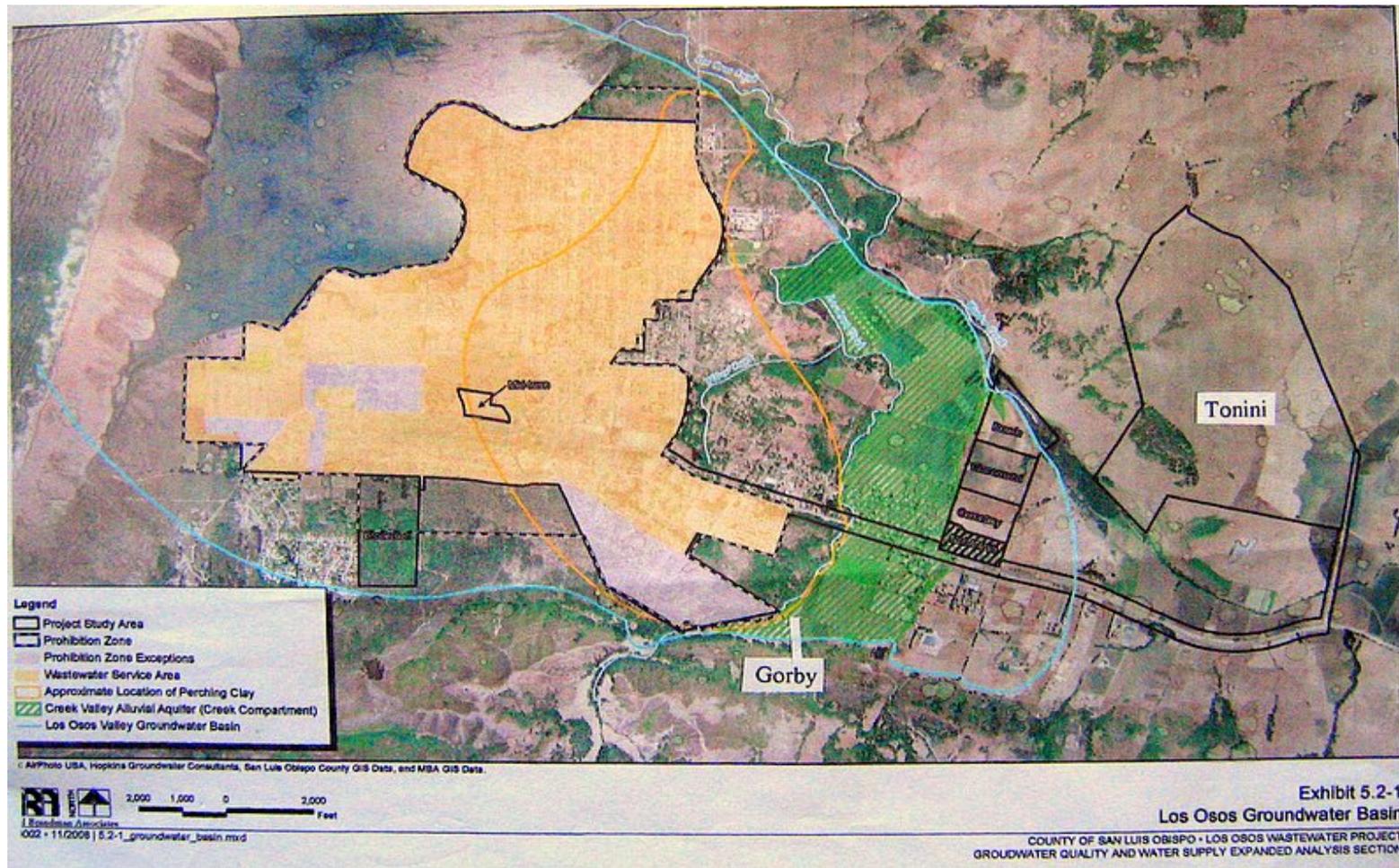
Tonini Project Fails to Return Treated Effluent to the Los Osos Groundwater Basin

- County preferred project defers the beneficial use of treated effluent to the groundwater purveyors (principally LOCSD and Golden State Water Co.)
- County contends Interlocutory Stipulated Judgement (ISJ) will compel the purveyors to achieve the beneficial use.
- Problem is that the ISJ is a voluntary, non binding legal framework to coordinate groundwater basin management.
- ISJ does not compel either purveyor to perform any specific action according to any specific timeline.

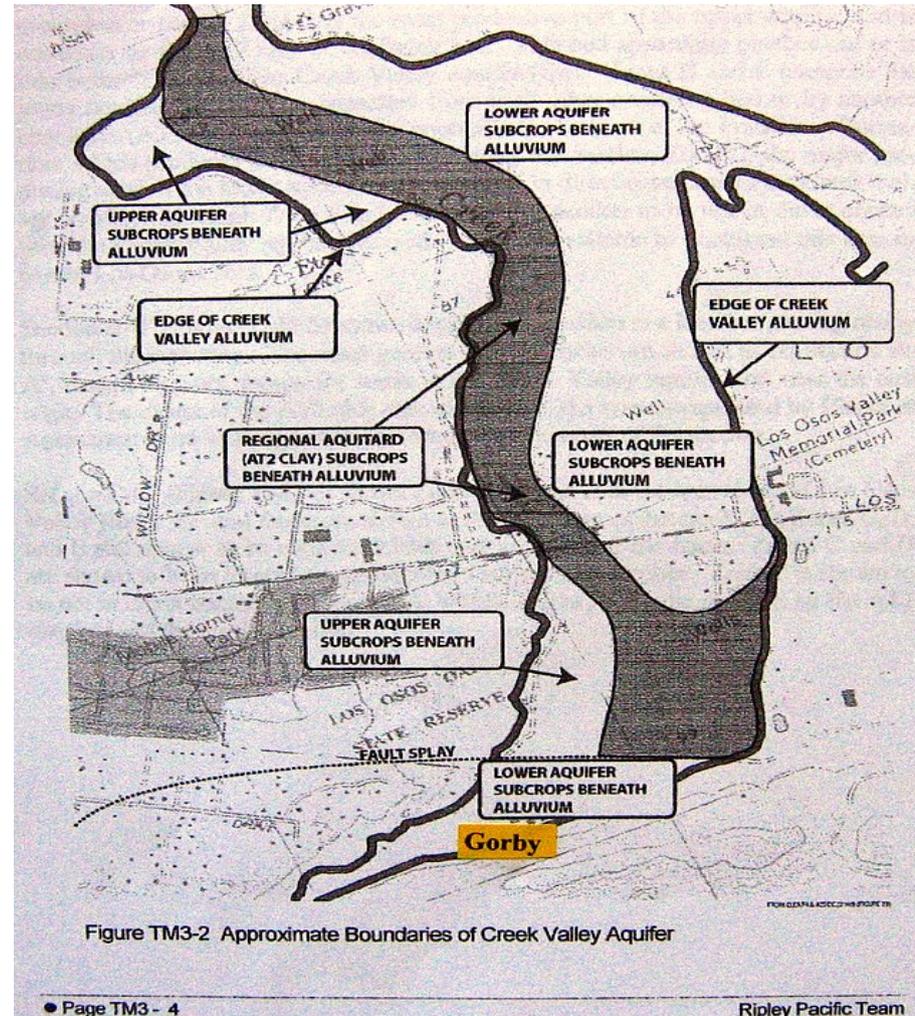
Disposal of Treated Wastewater within the Basin Must be Achieved

- July 2006 Technical Memorandum prepared by Kenneth D. Schmidt, a certified hydrogeologist in the State of California states “If a larger width of lateral flow is used, more than 2/3 of the lower aquifer recharge. . . would come from the Creek Valley Alluvial Aquifer.”
- Presently, Cleath and Associates is conducting a study of the Creek Valley Alluvial Aquifer (Creek Compartment) intended to evaluate and determine safe yield and existing water quality.

Creek Valley Alluvial Aquifer (Creek Compartment)



Approximate Boundary of Creek Compartment



Importance of Creek Compartment for Disposal of Treated Effluent

- Creek Compartment is subcomponent of larger Los Osos groundwater basin.
- Agricultural uses overly the Creek Compartment.
- Creek Compartment has storage potential for treated wastewater during dry weather (May-October).
- Lower basin strata surfaces at the creek bottom just south of Los Osos Valley Road.

Significance of Creek Compartment for Basin Management in Dry Weather

- Treated effluent may be stored in the Creek Compartment.
- Treated effluent may be provided to agricultural uses overlying the Basin.
- Using the Creek Compartment during dry weather would complement the use of the Broderson Site during wet weather (November-April).

Public Works Staff Report is Misleading

- Page 5 of today's report indicates “the Project . . . will clearly have an impact by increasing seawater intrusion, but that impact is being fully mitigated through Project efforts. . .”.
- In actuality the Project is failing to return 360 AFY into the lower strata of the Los Osos groundwater basin which equates to 80% of the existing deficiency in the lower basin strata.
- On Page 6 Staff's suggestion of an allocation of “treated effluent for the exclusive benefit of the environment and agriculture” is superficial at best.
- The Project cannot trade a relatively minor nitrate problem in the upper basin for a permanent loss of the primary source of domestic water supplies.

County Has Failed to Evaluate a Feasible Treatment Site Location

- The Gorby Site is approximately 51 acres and lies adjacent to the Urban Reserve Line and is fully disturbed by existing horse ranch operations.
- The Site overlies both the Creek Compartment and the Los Osos groundwater basin.
- The Site is proximate to agricultural uses overlying the basin.
- Most importantly, the site abuts Los Osos Creek at the location of surfacing lower basin strata.

Project Footprint at Gorby is Compact



Recommendations

- Abandon Tonini Ranch as a site for treatment or disposal.
- Commit to retain 100% of the treated effluent within the Los Osos groundwater basin.
- Commit to establish contracts for agricultural water exchange or in lieu and also urban reuse at the Sea Pines Golf Course now.
- Complete the Creek Compartment study before further consideration of Project by Planning Commission.
- Conduct a coequal analysis of the Gorby site as a potential location for the treatment facility and treated effluent distribution hub (summer time period).