



September 22, 2024

To: Interested Parties

Dan Heimel: Executive Director BMC

Chuck Cesena: Los Osos CSD

Mark Zimmer: Golden State Water Company

Beth Reineke: S&T Mutual

Subject:

Special Meeting, agenda item #5. SPECIAL PRESENTATION

a. Presentation by County Planning: Follow-Up on Los Osos Growth Rate Implementation Approach.

Coastal California can not build itself out of a lack of housing, low income or otherwise. Even if affordable land was available, resources are not, mainly water. Desalting our oceans has its own risks and liabilities and would not be sustainable on a massive scale. There are, as you know, coastal towns that are depending on depleted water sources. Los Osos is one of those, yet recently you approved more growth under the presumption that the Los Osos Water Basin is “trending toward sustainability.” DWR still classifies the Los Osos Water Basin as being in critical overdraft (see Executive Director’s Report, p. 6-7), and there is no data showing otherwise.

The County is using **estimated** water data that the Department of Water Resources says **is neither a measure of, nor proof of, sustainability**. The most recent Annual Monitoring Report showed chloride levels increasing, and seawater intrusion advancing - signs of overdraft.

In approving a 1% growth rate for Los Osos, you neglected to consider the impacts of all water-using development. The 1% growth rate does not include guesthouse additions or additional bedrooms, bathrooms, and hotel expansions. These additions are not subject to water offsets, nor do they pay into the Habitat Conservation Plan, though they can affect both.

The Coastal Commission has allowed politics to take precedence over science, and you have sided with, or maybe more accurately, acquiesced to, County and State pressure for more housing by approving a 1% growth rate for Los Osos that does not have the water resources to support it. The modifications by the CCC to the LOCP do not require a sustainable water supply, and this oversight could destroy our Basin.

The Los Osos Sustainability Group, and the Community, ask that you consider all of this in your role as protectors and managers of our Basin, the only source of potable water we have. Let the County know the Basin is not ready for more growth, more intensification. In several years, new monitoring wells will be installed, a Transient Model will be in place, hard data will be at hand - and it will be known if the Basin is actually "Sustainable".

Respectfully,

Patrick McGibney
Chair, Los Osos Sustainability Group