Los Robles del Mar
Annexation to the City of Pismo Beach

San Luis Obispo LAFCO
Staff Workshop
April 2, 2008
Whiskey really is for drinking and water really is for fighting!
or
…for preparing a Supplemental EIR
Specific Plan Summary

- 182 acre site within SOI
- 312 Total Residential Units
- Private School
- 60 units Affordable Senior Housing
- 69 acres included in open space
- Connected to City water system
- On-site wells would be part of municipal water source for the City
Key Issue: Transferring the on-site wells to the City for use in its municipal supply

- City had stated throughout CEQA process that the site would be served by State Water
- Impacts of pumping the on-site wells on the surrounding rural properties were not studied by the City as part of the CEQA Process
- Impacts of pumping on-site wells on the aquifer were not adequately studied as part of the CEQA process
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Key Players:

- Well organized group of rural land owners
- Water-challenged City (Pismo Beach)
- Another water-challenged City (AG) already using the aquifer
- Developer/Land Owner (working on this project since 1991)
- A private school (Ready to build new school)
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What is a LAFCO to do?

a. Send it back to the City to adequately address the impacts that were not studied

b. Request that the City serve the site using State Water as originally planned

c. Deny the proposal

d. Assume Lead Agency role and prepare a supplemental EIR that studies the impacts of the wells being used as a municipal supply (CEQA Guidelines 15052, 15096(e)(3), 15162, 15163)
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- Hire a good consultant to prepare SEIR (DWA)
- Made sure we had a well respected, experienced Hydrogeologist: Fugro, Inc.
- Ensure full participation by all parties
  - Mailed CDs to everybody
  - EIR was on the Web (bring the Clerk a special gift!)
- Respond to over 200 comment letters
- Prepare a huge staff report
- Conduct a fair and open hearing
Rural Land Owners with Water Rights
Use mostly shallow aquifer—could use deep aquifer
Results Show Deep and Shallow Aquifers
Private Rural Wells and Municipal Users

Deep Aquifer
- 270 afy Safe Yield
- 110 afy current use

Shallow Aquifer

Pismo Beach

Arroyo Grande
Figure 8: Subsurface Cross-Section A
CEQA provided the tool for LAFCO/public to clearly understand the water resources issue

Staff recommendation was innovative

- Condition the proposal so that City could not use the wells using a Covenant and Agreement, or
- Set up a monitoring program for the aquifer

Gave everybody a way to participate-information was accessible-"a level playing field"

Public Hearing was well organized, well attended (7 hours) and on cable
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Denial based on several key facts:

- Small aquifer and many existing and potential users
- City would not allocate existing water supply
- City could not document an adequate, reliable or sustainable water supply, unless the wells were included-(56668 (k) SLO LAFCO Policy 17.)

LAFCO has received high marks for a thoughtful decision and a transparent public process

Sets a precedent for future LAFCO decisions and water resources
The Cliffs in Pismo Beach

Staff Workshop 2009