

A hand holding a small globe of the Earth, with water splashing over the top. The globe shows the Americas. The background is a light blue gradient.

# Salinas Valley Interim Replacement Drinking Water Agreement

June 13, 2017

**Cris Carrigan**, Director  
State Water Board, Office of Enforcement

**John Robertson**, Executive Officer  
Central Coast Regional Board

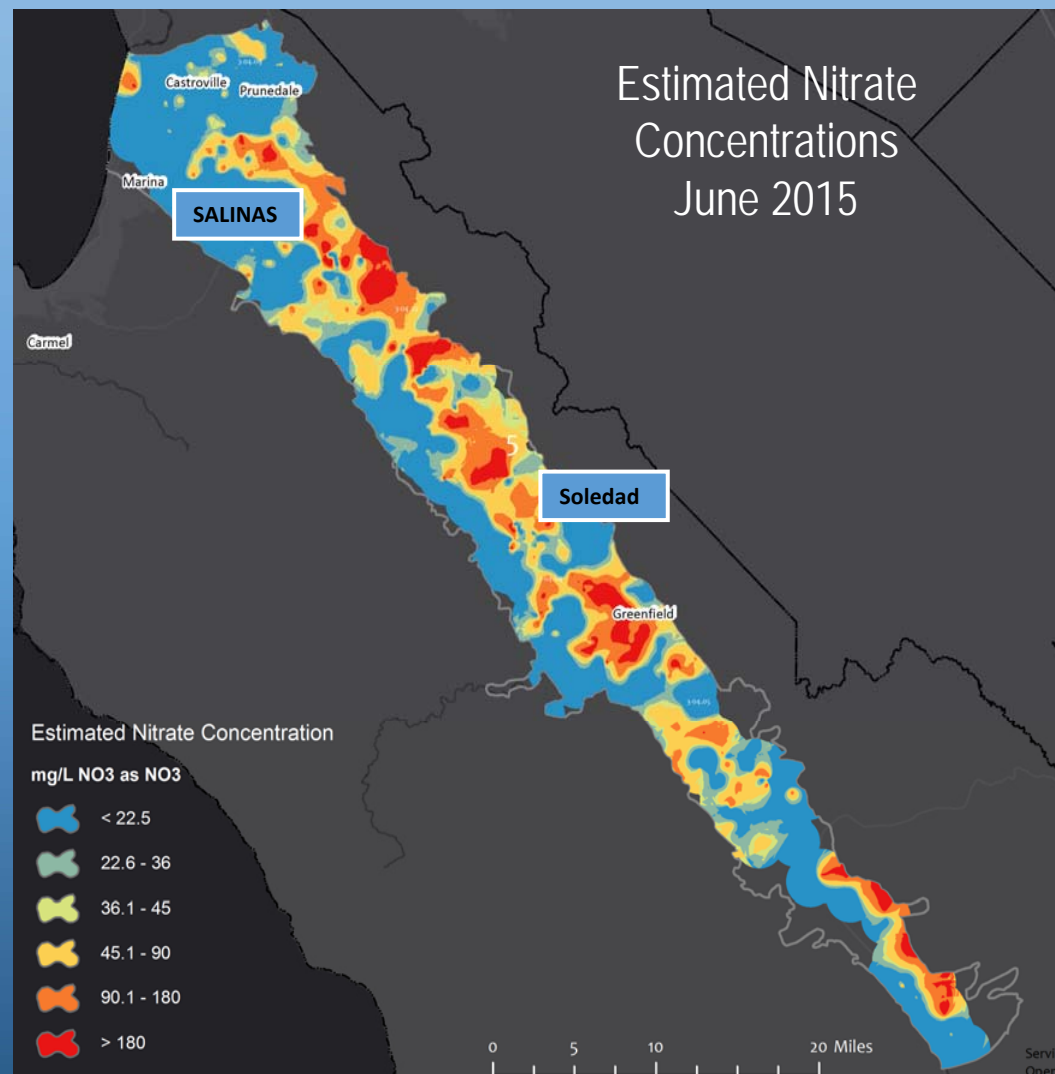
**Brett Harrell**, Stewardship Group

# BACKGROUND

- Nitrate pollution in groundwater contaminating drinking water supplies (wells)
- Serious health impacts- highest risk pregnant women & infants
- 2012 legislation package focused on nitrate-impacted groundwater basins in Salinas Valley & Tulare Lake Basin. 2012 UC Davis Report finds synthetic fertilizer largest source of nitrate loading in groundwater
- Human Right to Water 2012 (AB 685)
- Individual vs. Collective Replacement strategy

# Nitrate contamination is widespread

- 41% of ALL wells in Salinas Valley have MCL over safe drinking water standard
- 55% of domestic drinking water wells exceeded MCL
- 34% of the total land area of the groundwater in Salinas Valley is contaminated
- Health impacts include
  - Blue baby syndrome
  - Other birth defects w/lower exposures
  - Cancers (bladder/thyroid)

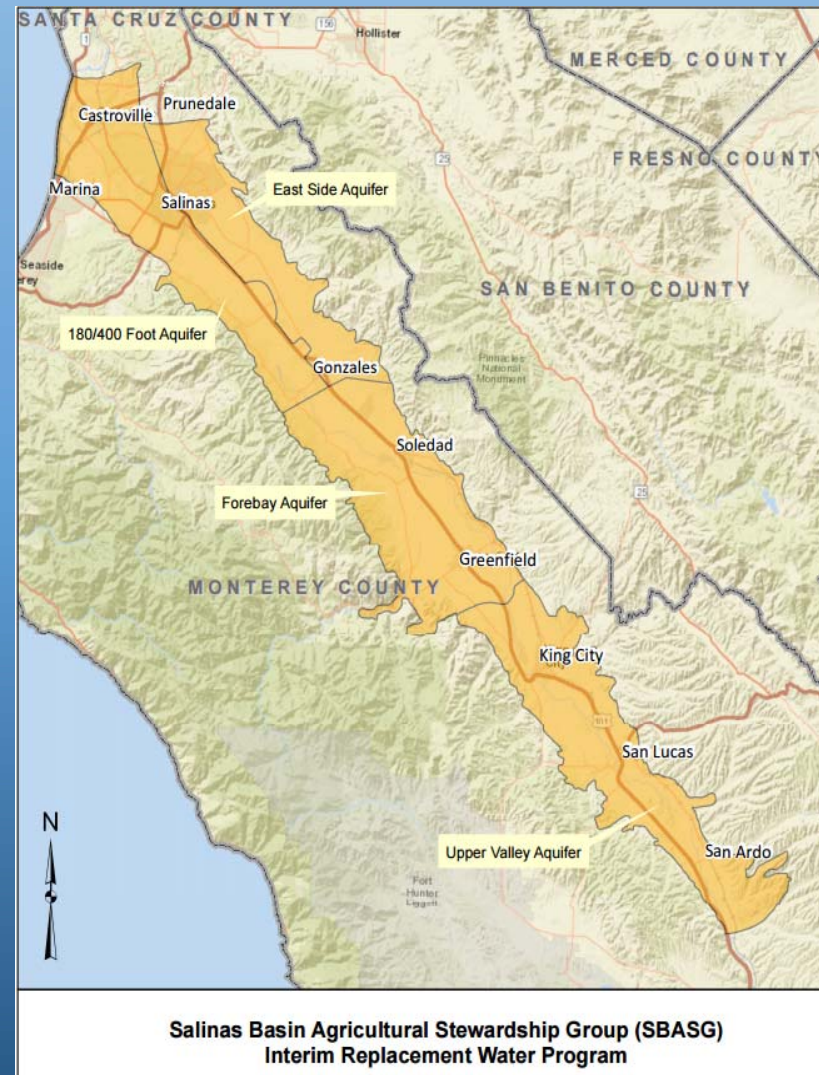


# Salinas Valley Interim Drinking Water Agreement

- Cooperative group “Salinas Basin Agricultural Stewardship Group LLC” (Stewardship Group)

## Groundwater sub-basins:

- ❖ 180/400 foot
  - ❖ East Side
  - ❖ Forebay
  - ❖ Upper Valley
- Exhibit A agreement identifies 58 water systems out of compliance with above-Nitrate MCL (45 mg/L)
    - 3 Local Primary Agency (LPA)
    - 42 Small Water Systems
    - 13 private wells





# TERMS OF AGREEMENT

- FREE drinking water to affected residents in 4 sub-basins
- Enforcement standstill
- Develop long-term solution
- 1 year pilot with option for 2<sup>nd</sup> year
- 1<sup>st</sup> year 35 out of 58 water systems
  - Affecting ~850 residents
- Stewardship Group membership enrollment extended to June 1<sup>st</sup>
- Enforcement actions for non-Stewardship Group Members (>40 acres)



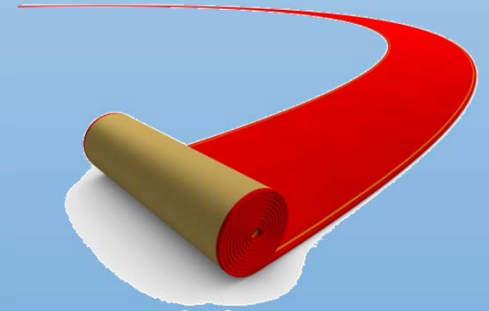
## ACCOUNTABILITY

- Stewardship Group ultimately responsible
- Water Boards staff oversight
- Program audit
- Performance metrics to evaluate program success
- Public Accountability
  - Regular updates to Central Coast Board & State Water Board Exec
  - Community meetings

## CHALLENGES

- Effective outreach to disadvantaged communities
- Long-term solution to address chronic nitrate issue

# IMPLEMENTATION



- Coalition for Urban/Rural Environmental Stewardship (CURES) working for Stewardship Group
- First mail-out began in mid-April
  - 3 applications received (16 residents)
  - Tested 3 wells
  - Bottled water deliveries to begin in June
- Application package redistributed & follow-up phone calls made
- Coordination with:
  - Environmental Justice Coalition for Water (EJCW)
  - University of California Los Angeles (UCLA)

## NEXT STEPS

- Continued outreach and coordination with Monterey County Public Health
  - Advertisement at local health clinics
  - Community meetings in greenfield/Soledad area
  - Farmworker Day (Día Del Trabajador Agricola) August 27, 2017
  - Media (Radio Bilingue/Telemundo)



# Summary

- Agreement provides immediate relief ~850 residents
- Allows for development of long-term solutions
- Serves as a guide for other basins with similar issues

# Questions/Discussion

