



**County of Ventura
Drought Resilience Plan
Drought Task Force
Kick Off Meeting**

January 20, 2026

Drought Resilience Plan Welcome and Introductions

What is the County of Ventura Drought Resilience Plan?

Purpose: The County of Ventura Drought Resilience Plan (County Drought Resilience Plan) evaluates potential drought and water shortage risks and provides emergency and interim solutions for water shortages, fulfilling Senate Bill (SB) 552: Drought Planning for Small Water Suppliers, State Small Water Systems, and Domestic Well Communities (Hertzberg) requirements.

Scope: The Drought Resilience Plan applies exclusively to domestic wells and state small water systems within the County.

- **State small water system:** A system for the provision of piped water to the public for human consumption that **serves at least 5, but not more than 14, service connections and does not regularly serve drinking water to more than an average of 25 individuals daily for more than 60 days out of the year**, as defined in Section 116275 (n) of the Health and Safety Code. [Water Code §10609.51\(k\)](#)
- **Domestic well:** A groundwater well used to supply water for the domestic needs of **an individual residence or a water system that is not a public water system and that has no more than 4 service connections**, as defined in Section 116681 of the Health and Safety Code. [Water Code §10609.51\(m\)](#)

County of Ventura CSP Team and Roles

County Project Coordination Team (PCT)

Anastasia Seims, P.E. – Public Works, County Lead
Shawna Schlageter – CEO Office, County Lead
Kim Dellacort, Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services
John Gauthier, Watershed Protection Group
Timothy Krone, Environmental Health
Shelley Sussman, Planning Division

Stantec Team

Rina Buck-Macleod, PE, County CSP Lead
Emily Huang, County CSP Deputy

California Department of Water Resources (DWR)

Julie Ekstrom, PhD, Program Manager
Sarah Ko, Deputy Program Manager

County Drought Task Force

In compliance with SB552, County has invited representatives from the state and other local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, and community-based organizations, local water suppliers, and local residents, to participate in the Task Force.

County of Ventura Drought Resilience Plan Overview and Schedule

County Drought and Water Shortage Task Force

Drought Task Force Charter

- Describes the roles, responsibilities, membership, and decision-making authorities of County, PCT, Task Force
- Includes a Communication and Engagement Framework

Water Shortage Task Force (Task Force) – Consistent with [California Water Code \(CWC\) Section 10609.70\(a\)\(1\)](#):

- A county shall establish a standing county drought and water shortage task force to facilitate drought and water shortage preparedness for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county's jurisdiction, and **shall invite representatives from the state and other local governments, including groundwater sustainability agencies, and community-based organizations, local water suppliers, and local residents**, to participate in the task force.

Drought Resilience Plan Overview

Plan elements must include:

- Potential **drought** and **water shortage** risks
- Proposed interim and long-term solutions for **state smalls** and **domestic wells** in the county

Minimum Considerations for implementation include:

- **Consolidations** for existing water systems and domestic wells
- Domestic well drinking water **mitigation programs**
- **Provision of emergency and interim drinking water solutions**
- An analysis of the **steps necessary to implement** the plan
- An analysis of **funding sources** available to implement the plan

Definitions

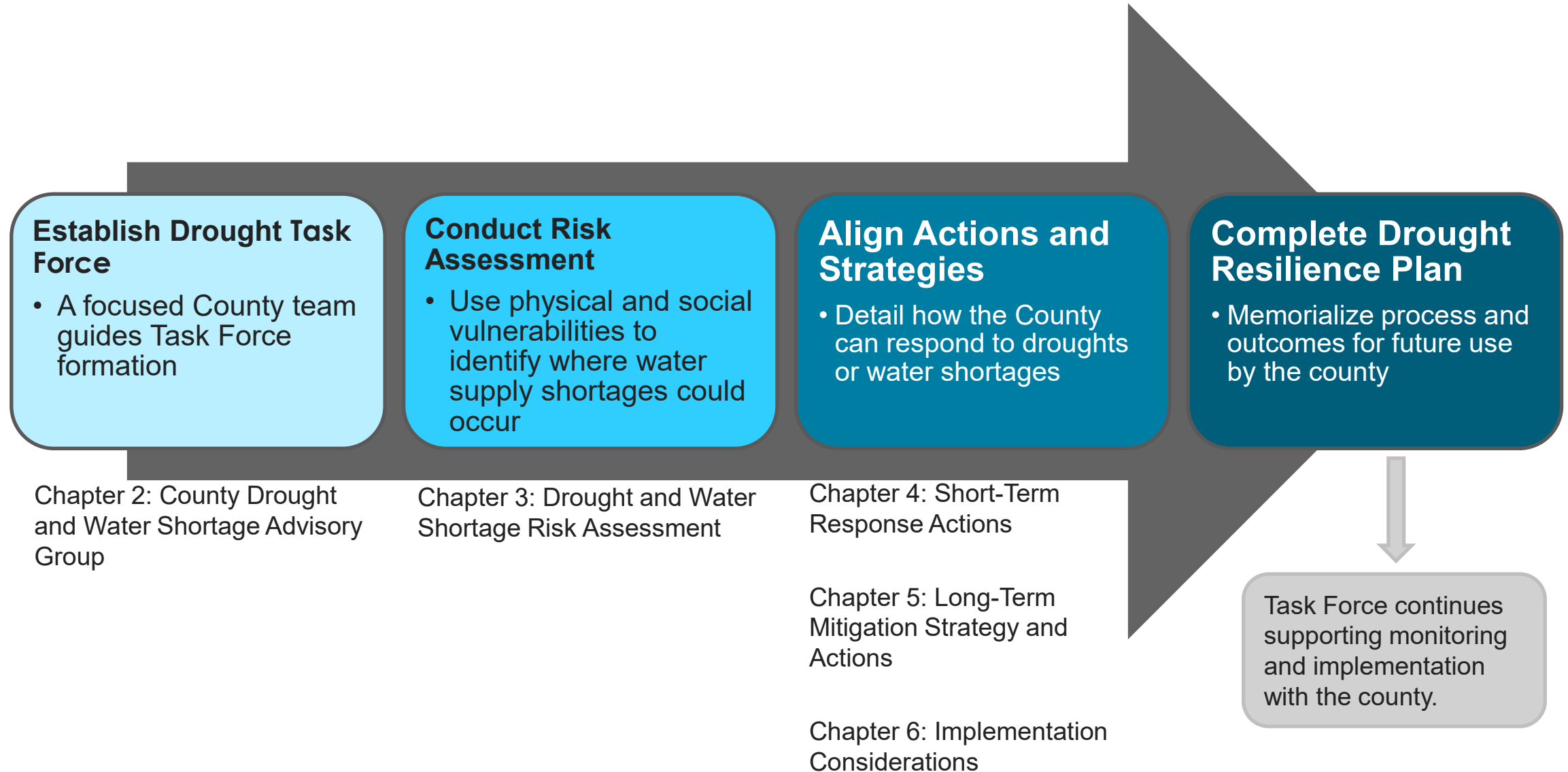
- **State small water system:** A system for the provision of piped water to the public for human consumption that serves at least 5, but not more than 14, service connections and does not regularly serve drinking water to more than an average of 25 individuals daily for more than 60 days out of the year, as defined in Section 116275 (n) of the Health and Safety Code. [Water Code §10609.51\(k\)](#)
- **Domestic well:** A groundwater well used to supply water for the domestic needs of an individual residence or a water system that is not a public water system and that has no more than 4 service connections, as defined in Section 116681 of the Health and Safety Code. [Water Code §10609.51\(m\)](#)
- **Drought:** A period of abnormally dry weather that results in water shortages. [SB 552](#)
- **Water Shortage:** a condition in which the demand for water exceeds the available supply. [SB 552](#)

[SB 552 definitions](#) - intended to help small water suppliers and rural communities prepare for and respond to droughts and water shortages, **regardless of the source of their water supply.**

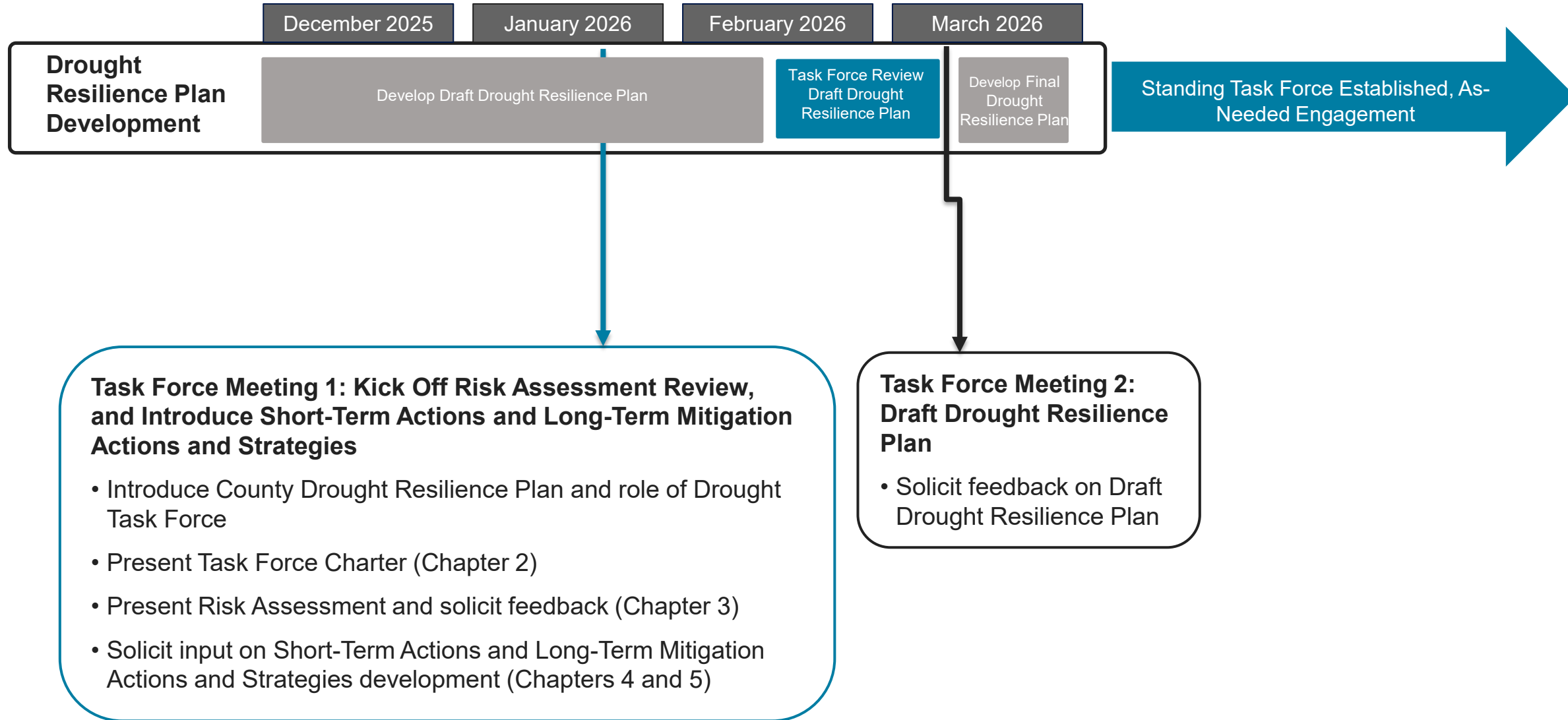
County of Ventura Drought Resilience Plan Overview

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: County Drought and Water Shortage Task Force
- Chapter 3: Drought and Water Shortage Risk Assessment
- Chapter 4: Short-Term Response Actions
- Chapter 5: Long-Term Mitigation Strategies and Actions
- Chapter 6: Implementation Considerations

Drought Resilience Plan Development Process



Anticipated Task Force Engagement/Schedule



Note: Dates and process subject to change

County of Ventura Risk Assessment Overview and Discussion

Ventura County Drought Resilience Plan Overview

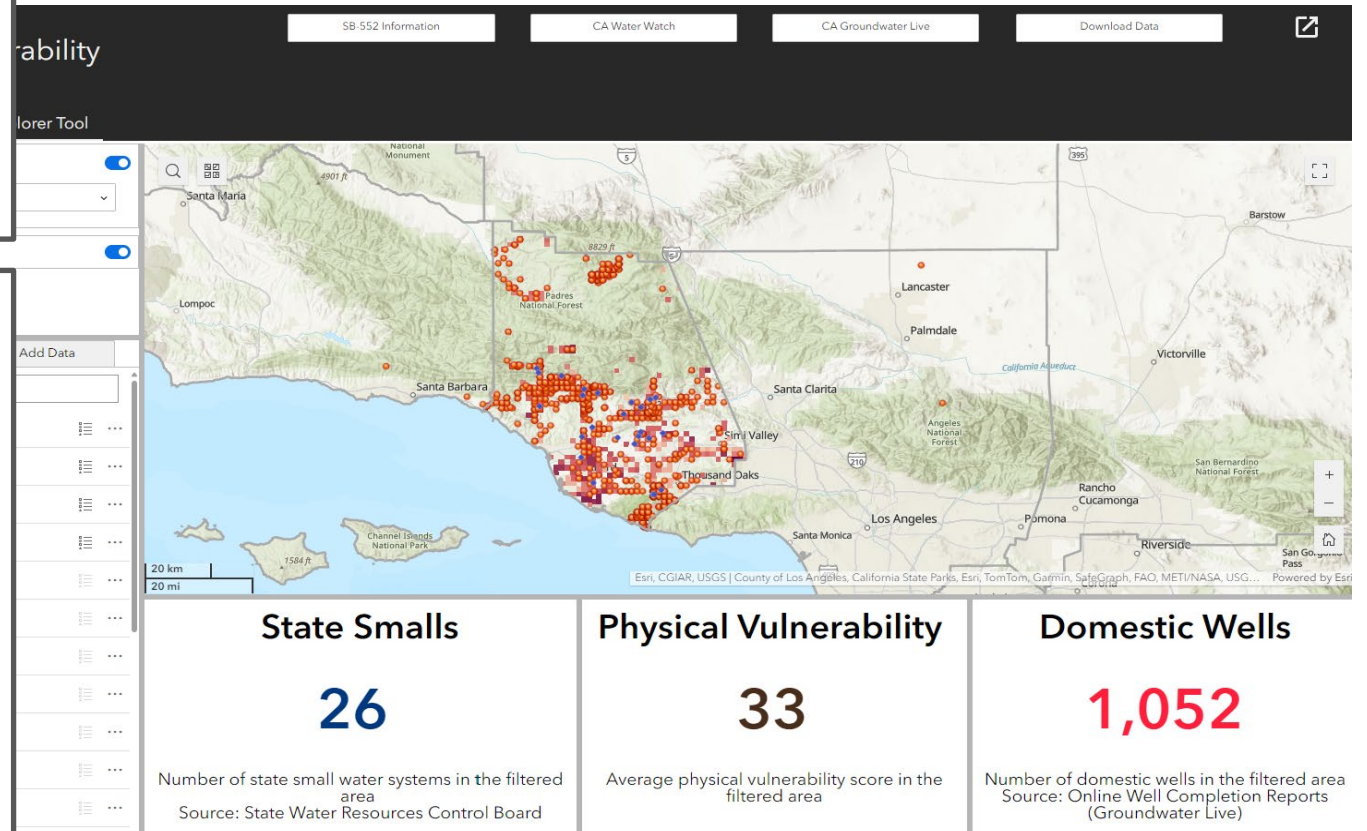
- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: County Drought and Water Shortage Task Force
- **Chapter 3: Drought and Water Shortage Risk Assessment**
- Chapter 4: Short-Term Response Actions
- Chapter 5: Long-Term Mitigation Strategy and Actions
- Chapter 6: Implementation Considerations

Drought and Water Shortage Risk Assessment Overview

Key Question: Where do physical vulnerabilities intersect with state small water systems/domestic wells, and how could social vulnerabilities influence decisions and identification of short-term actions and long-term strategies?

Approach:

- ✓ Initial findings using DWR Water Shortage Vulnerability Explorer Tool [Water Shortage Vulnerability \(arcgis.com\)](https://arcgis.com)
- ✓ Identify vulnerable state small water systems and domestic wells within the county
- ✓ Characterize vulnerabilities
- ✓ Use outcomes to:
 - Assist in areas of focus for the county
 - Identify best short-term actions and long-term strategies



Risk Assessment – Key Definitions

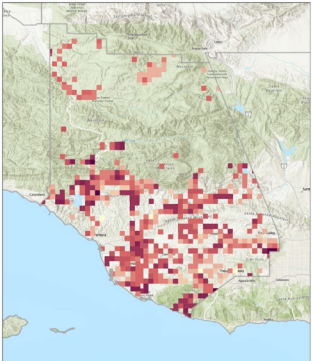
HAZARD – Source of harm or difficulty created by a meteorological, environmental, geological, other event, or hydrological and/or other environmental conditions. In the context of SB 552, hazards are the natural, human-made, and social processes that can lead to water shortages in the county.

COMMUNITY ASSETS – The people, structures, facilities, and systems that have value to the community. The minimum assets considered as part of the Drought Resilience Plan must include ***state small water systems*** and ***domestic wells*** and populations reliant on these water supplies.

VULNERABILITY – Characteristics of community assets or population that make them susceptible to damage from a given hazard. It includes both ***physical vulnerability and social vulnerability***.

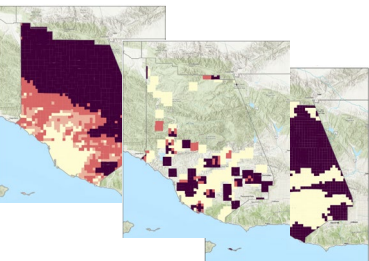
Risk Assessment - Approach

Use DWR Water Shortage Vulnerability Tool to evaluate physical vulnerabilities within the County

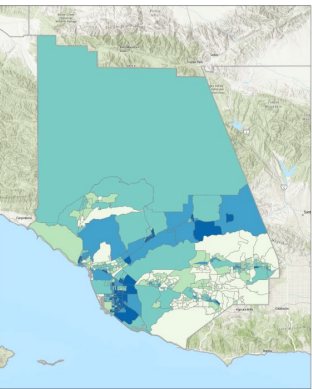


Determine what indicators drive physical vulnerability

- Physical Vulnerabilities**
- Climate Change Conditions
 - Current and Recent Environmental Conditions
 - Infrastructure Vulnerability

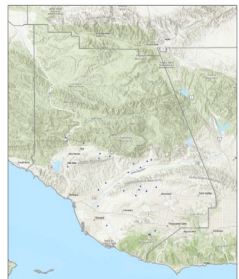
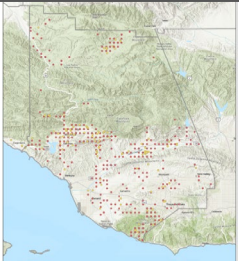


Use DWR Water Shortage Vulnerability Tool to identify social vulnerabilities within the County

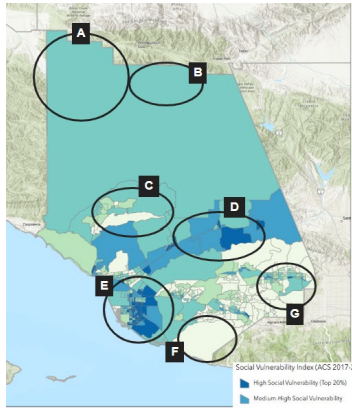
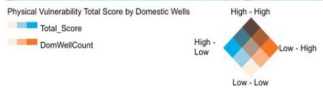
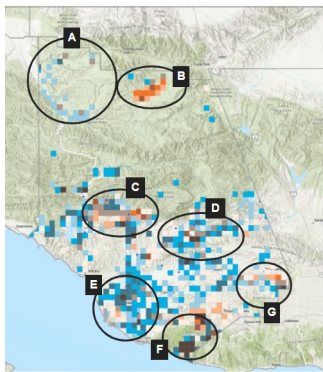


- Social Vulnerabilities**
- Socioeconomic Status
 - Language and Education
 - Demographic
 - Housing and Transportation

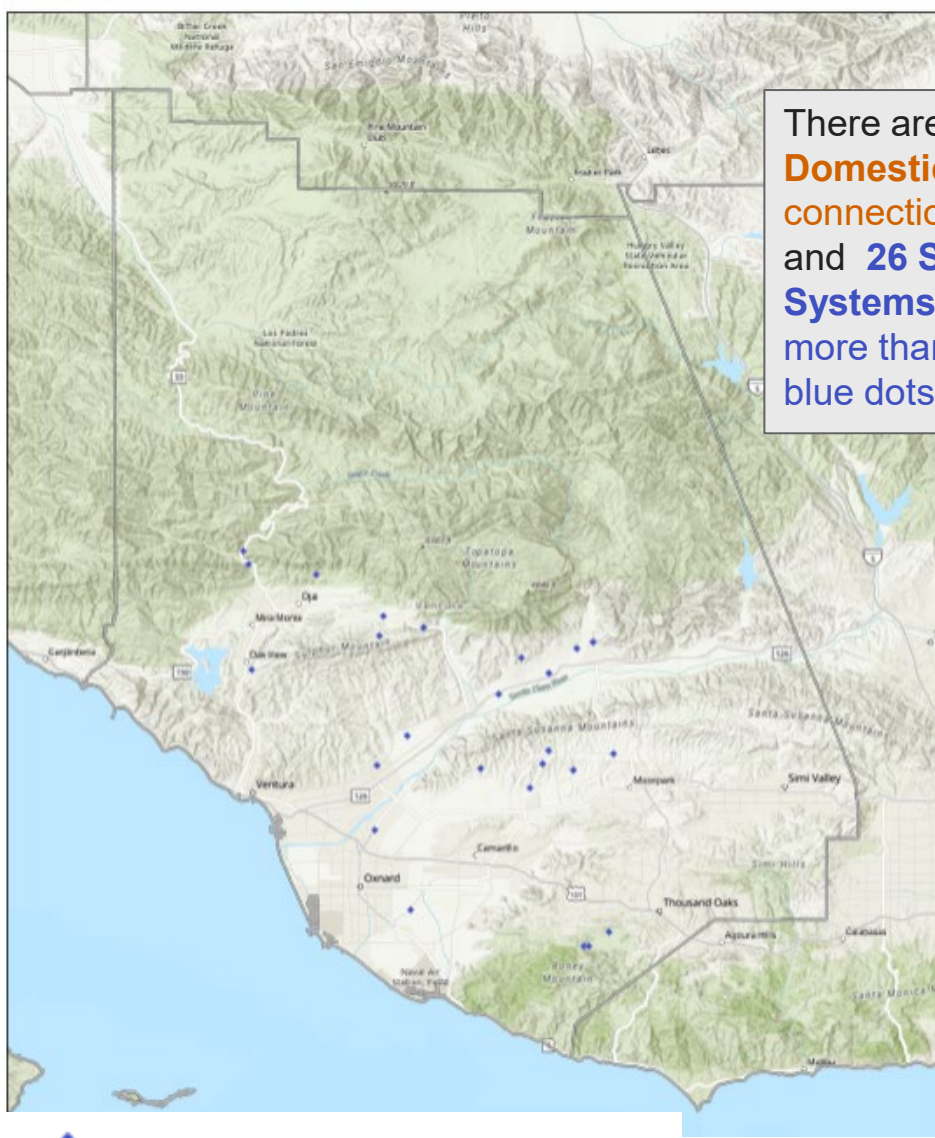
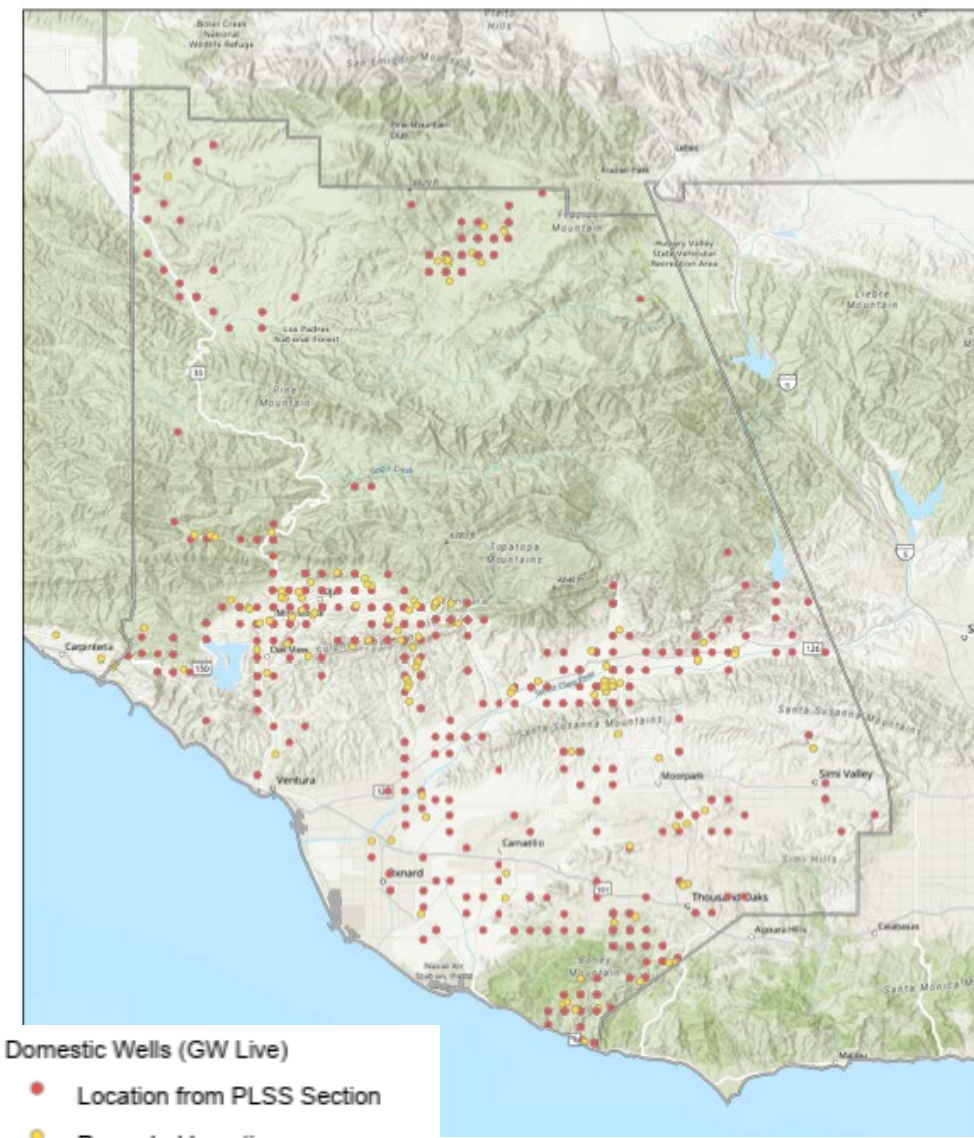
Merge with state small water systems and domestic wells



Identify where physical and social vulnerabilities intersect with state small water systems and domestic wells



Identified State Small Water Systems & Domestic Wells in Ventura County



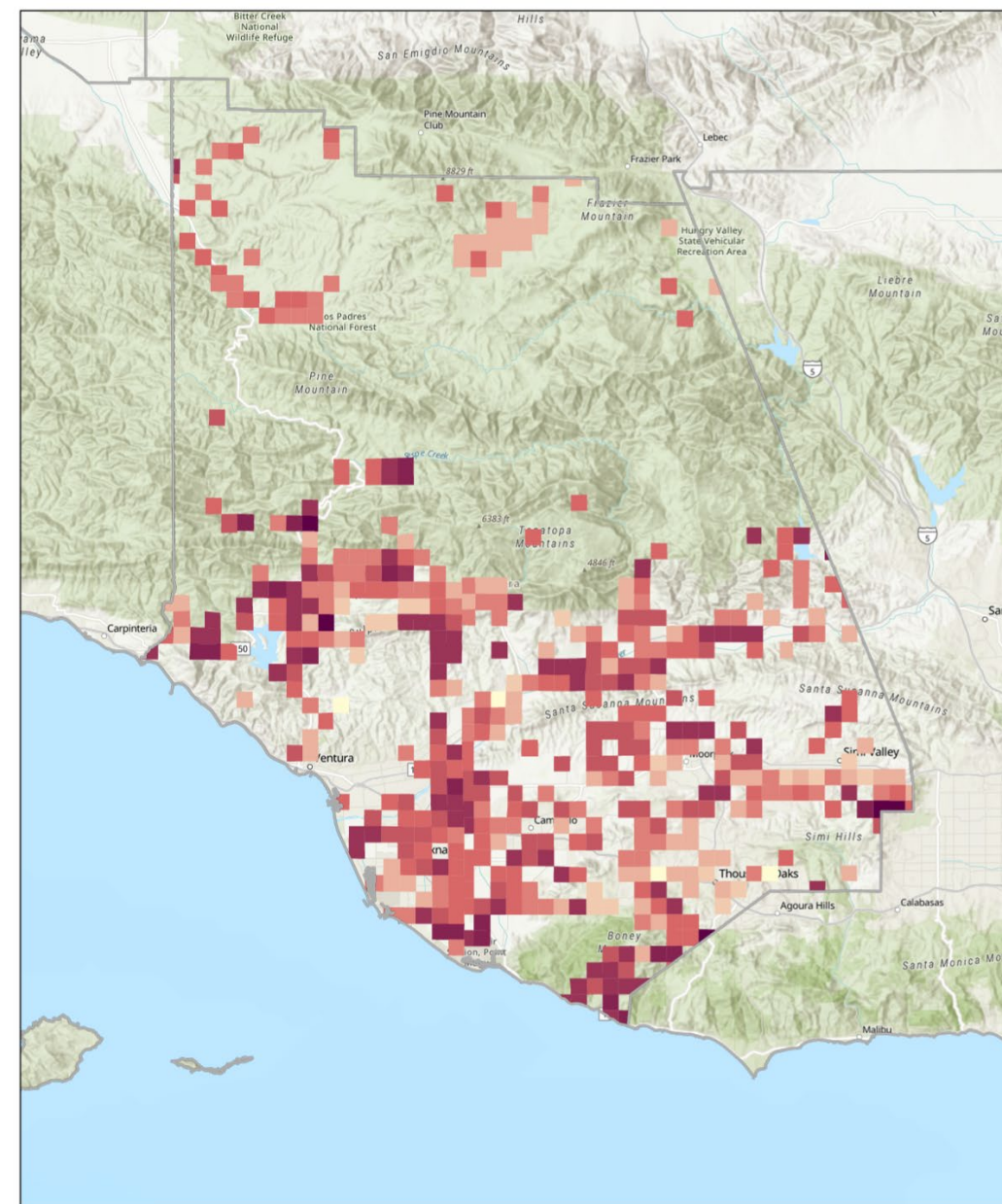
There are approximately **1,112 Domestic Wells** (serving 1 to 4 connections –red/yellow dots) and **26 State Small Water Systems** (at least 5, but not more than 14 connections – blue dots)

Physical Vulnerability Results

- Darker shades indicate higher physical vulnerability
- Only those with a domestic well or state small water systems are shaded

Main Drivers of Physical Vulnerability in Ventura County

- Wildfire risk
- Fractured rock
- Water quality aquifer risk



12/5/2025, 10:57:32 AM

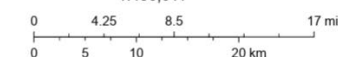
California Counties

Physical Vulnerability Index (Sections)



World Hillshade

1:436,611



Esri, CGIAR, USGS, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, California Department of Conservation, California Department of Fish and Game, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. Contact: gis@water.ca.gov. Sources: Esri,

Physical Vulnerability Total Score by Domestic Wells Overlain with State Small Water Systems

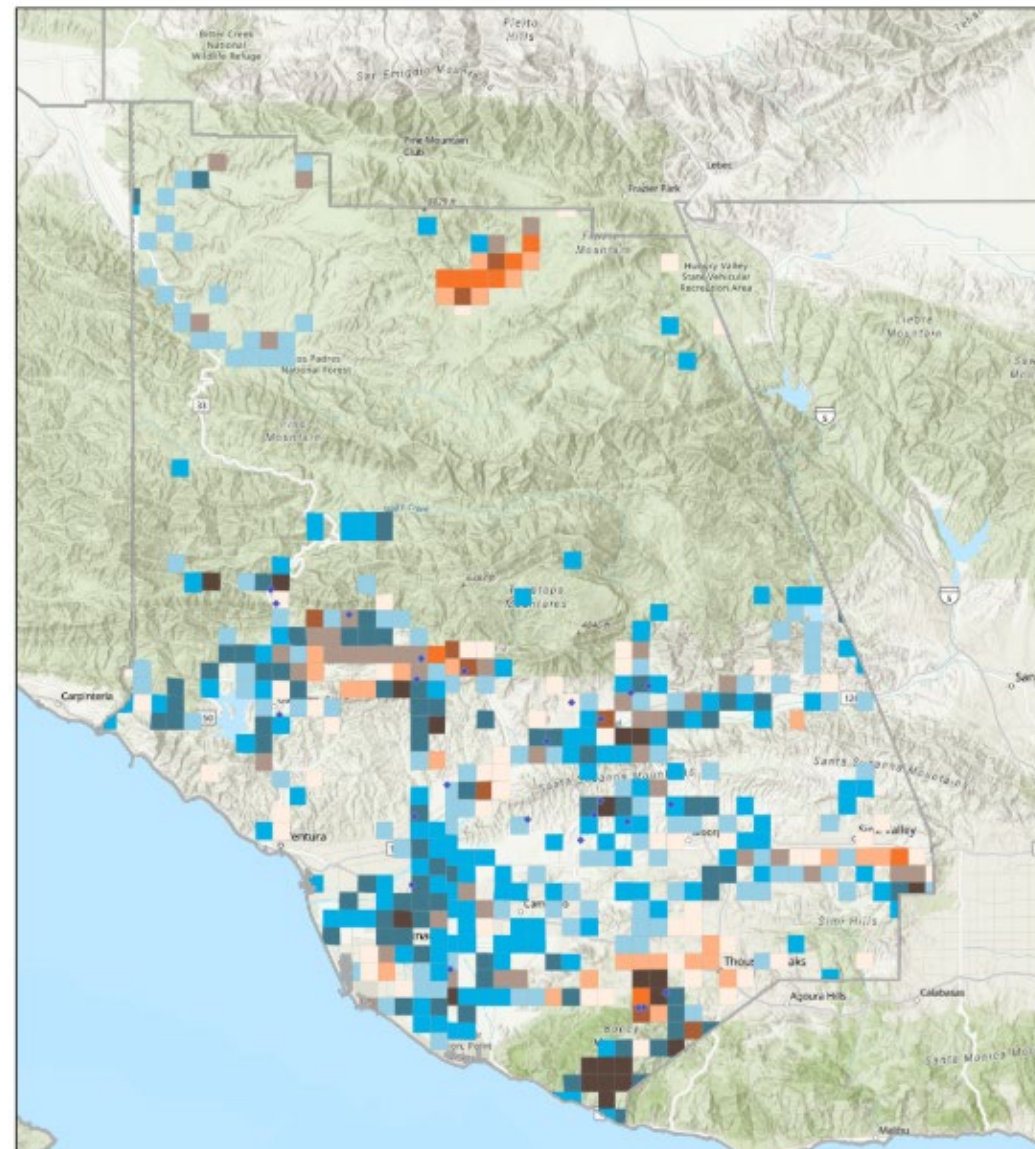
Domestic wells:

- Combines physical vulnerability and domestic well locations

High physical vulnerability + high number of domestic wells

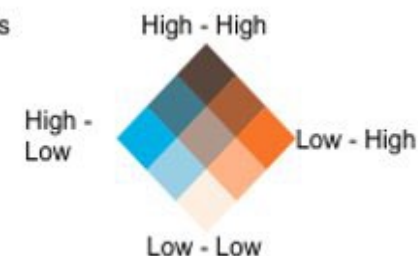
High physical vulnerability + low number of domestic wells

Low physical vulnerability + high number of domestic wells



Physical Vulnerability Total Score by Domestic Wells

Total_Score
DomWellCount



Identified Regions with Water Shortage Vulnerability

A. Isolated domestic wells in the Cuyama Valley Basin

B. Areas within the Lockwood Valley Basin

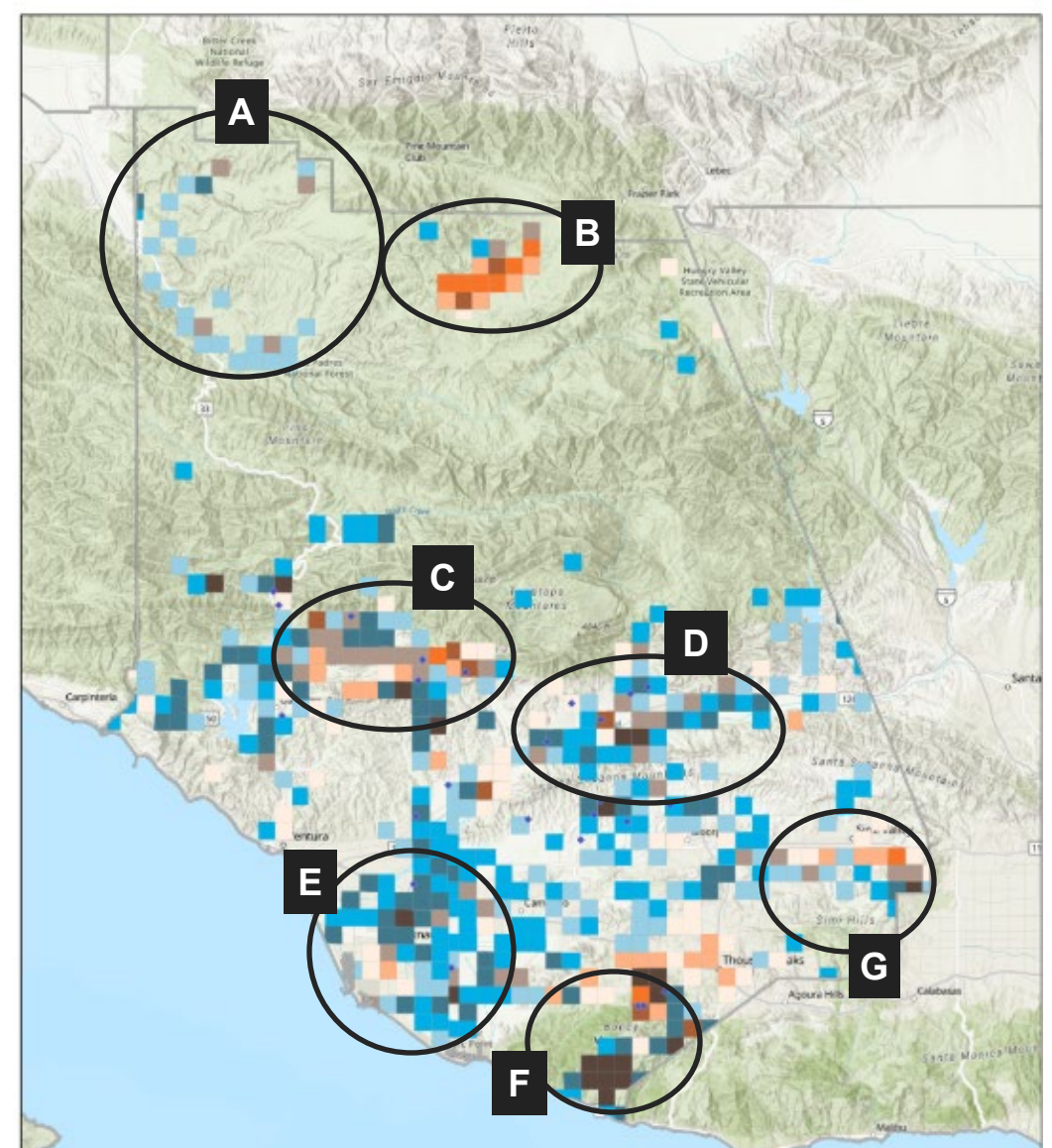
C. Areas within the Ojai Valley and Upper Ojai Valley Basins

D. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Filmore and Piru Basins

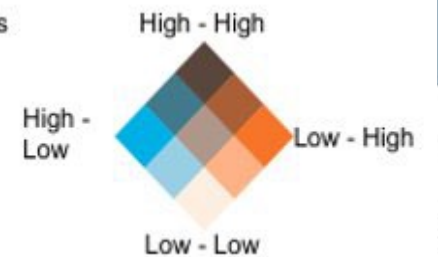
E. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Oxnard Basin

F. Areas within Big Sycamore Canyon and Hidden Valley Basin

G. Areas within the Simi Valley Basin



Physical Vulnerability Total Score by Domestic Wells



Physical Vulnerability Intersection with Social Vulnerability

- Darker shades indicate higher social vulnerability
- Results aggregated by Census Block Group

A. Isolated domestic wells in the Cuyama Valley Basin

B. Areas within the Lockwood Valley Basin

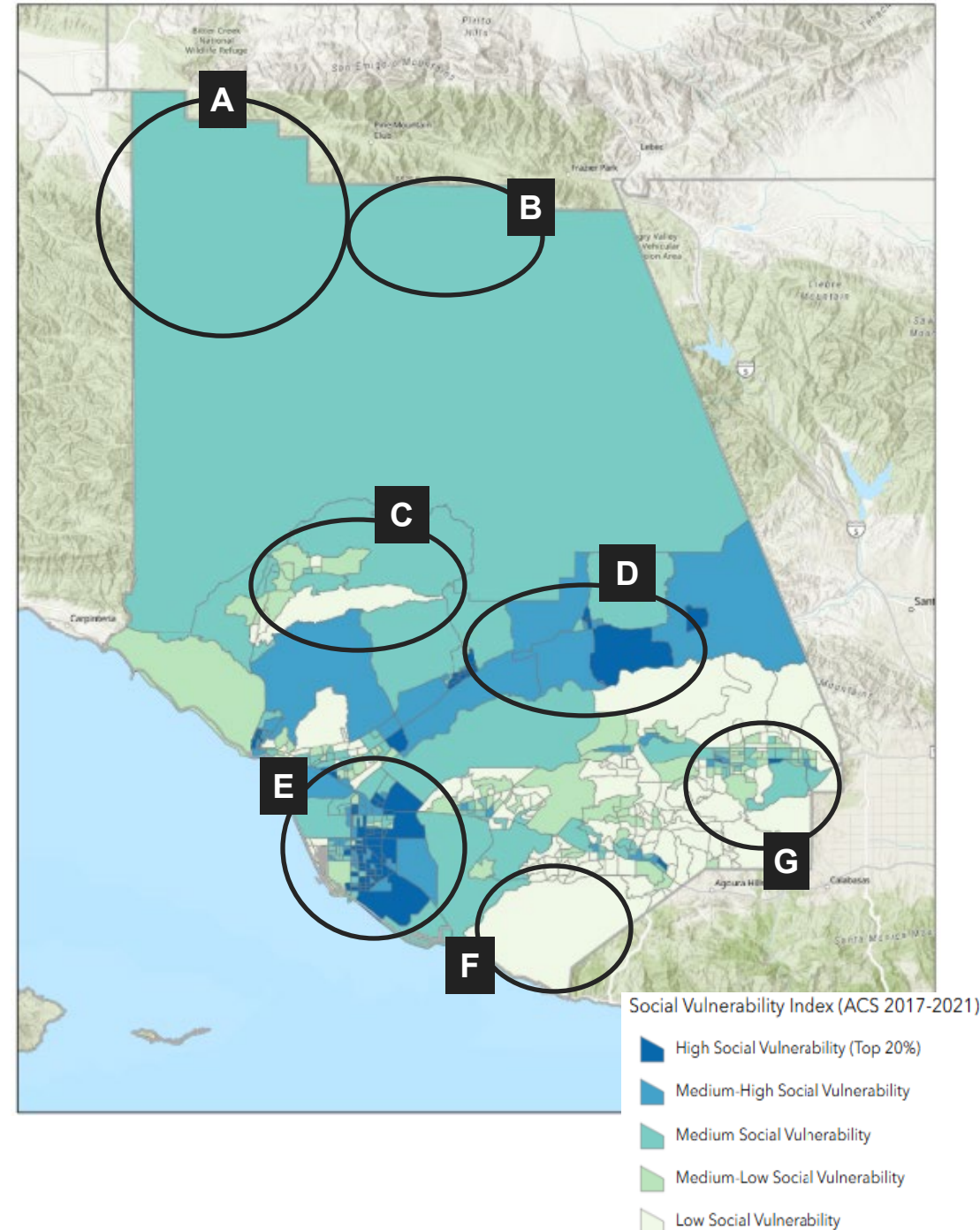
C. Areas within the Ojai Valley and Upper Ojai Valley Basins

D. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Filmore and Piru Basins

E. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Oxnard Basin

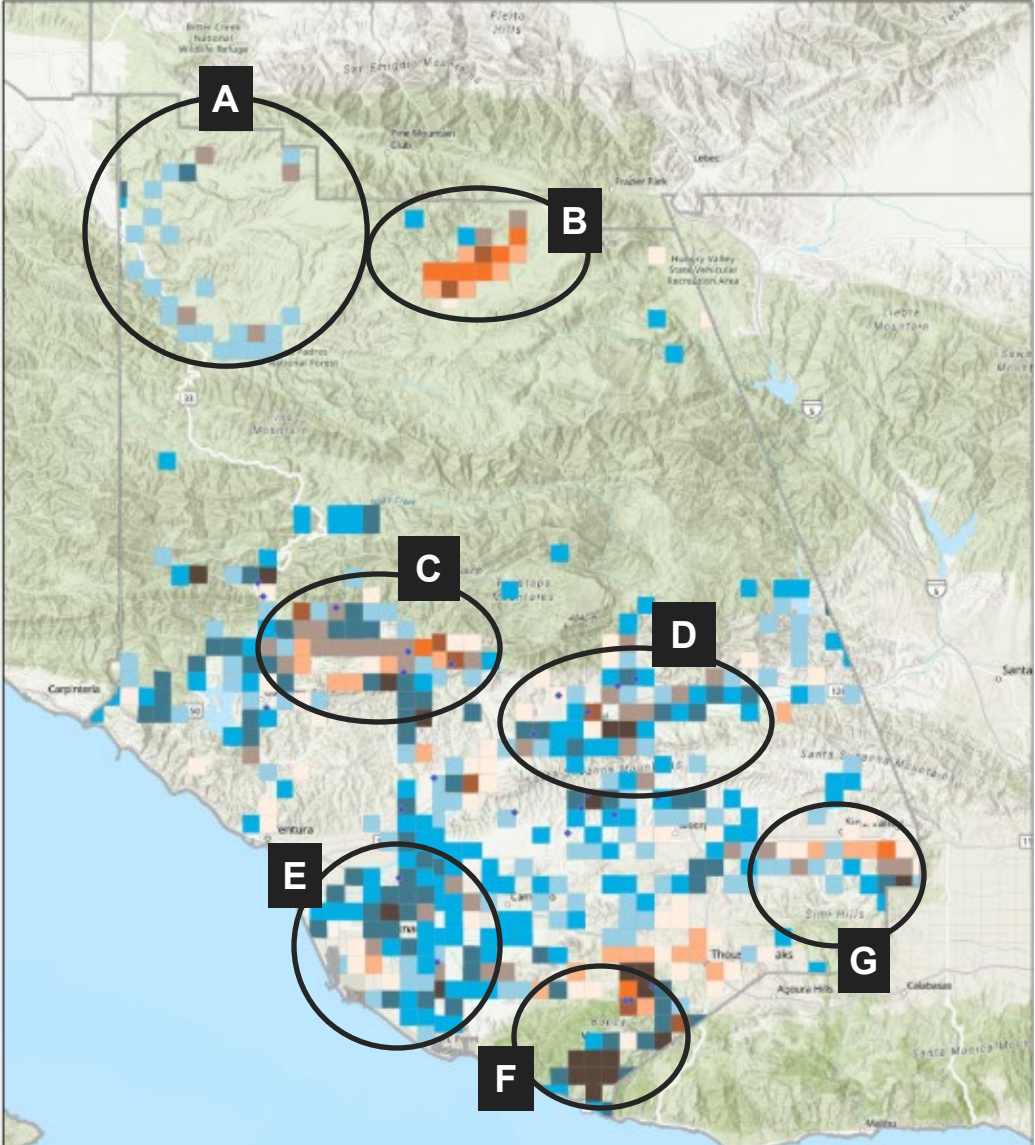
F. Areas within Big Sycamore Canyon and Hidden Valley Basin

G. Areas within the Simi Valley Basin

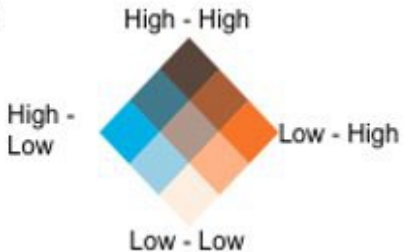


Overview: Regions with Water Shortage Vulnerability

Area with Water Shortage Vulnerability and Domestic Wells/State Small Water Systems	Physical Vulnerability Indicators	Social Vulnerability Score
A. Isolated domestic wells in the Cuyama Valley Basin	- High wildfire risk - Overdrafted basin - Water quality aquifer risk	Medium
B. Areas within the Lockwood Valley Basin	- High wildfire risk - Fractured rock	Medium
C. Areas within the Ojai Valley and Upper Ojai Valley Basins	- Fractured rock - Areas with multiple dry years - High wildfire risk - Water quality aquifer risk	Low to Medium-High
D. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Filmore and Piru Basins	- High wildfire risk - Water quality aquifer risk - Areas with multiple dry years - Amount of irrigated agriculture	Low to High
E. Areas within the Santa Clara River Valley-Oxnard Basin	- Overdrafted basin - Groundwater level decline - Water quality aquifer risk - Amount of irrigated agriculture - Saltwater intrusion into coastal aquifers	Medium-High
F. Areas within Big Sycamore Canyon and Hidden Valley Basin	- Fractured rock - Water quality aquifer risk - High wildfire risk	Low
G. Areas within the Simi Valley Basin	- High wildfire risk - Water quality aquifer risk - Fractured rock	Low to High



Physical Vulnerability Total Score by Domestic Wells



Risk Assessment Discussion

- Are the areas showing physical vulnerability aligned with your expectations?
- Do the primary drivers of physical vulnerability - such as wildfire risk, fractured rock, and water quality - match what you anticipated?
- Is anything missing/are there data gaps?

Overview of Short-Term Response Actions and Long-Term Mitigation Strategies and Actions

Ventura County Drought Resilience Plan Overview

- Chapter 1: Introduction
- Chapter 2: County Drought and Water Shortage Task Force
- Chapter 3: Drought and Water Shortage Risk Assessment
- **Chapter 4: Short-Term Response Actions**
- **Chapter 5: Long-Term Mitigation Strategy and Actions**
- Chapter 6: Implementation Considerations

Definitions

Short-Term Response Actions
mitigate impacts during
drought/water shortage onset and
throughout a drought/water shortage
event

Long-Term Mitigation Strategies and
Actions **reduce the vulnerability** to
drought/ water shortage events

The Drought Resilience
Plan will identify
actions/strategies and
develop an implementation
strategy

Legislative Direction

SB 552 requires that each County develop a drought and water shortage plan that covers long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells, per CWC Section 10609.70

*(b) A county shall develop a plan that includes potential drought and water shortage risk and **proposed interim and long-term solutions for state small water systems and domestic wells within the county's jurisdiction**. The plan may be a stand-alone document or may be included as an element in an existing county plan, such as a local hazard mitigation plan, emergency operations plan, climate action plan, or general plan. A county shall consult with its drought task force or alternative coordinating process as established by this section in developing its plan. A county shall consider, at a minimum, all of the following in its plan:*

- (1) **Consolidations for existing water systems and domestic wells.***
- (2) **Domestic well drinking water mitigation programs.***
- (3) **Provision of emergency and interim drinking water solutions.***
- (4) An analysis of the steps necessary to implement the plan.*
- (5) An analysis of local, state, and federal funding sources available to implement the plan*

What are Short-Term Response Actions?

Actions that help mitigate the impacts of a water shortage when it occurs

Categories

- **Emergency/Interim Drinking Water Supplies** are actions that provide water during a shortage in various ways
- **Interties** are actions that provide water during a shortage using a connection between water systems
- **Mutual Aid Agreements** are actions that help ensure emergency water supplies can be quickly distributed
- **Permit Streamlining and Coordination** is an action that addresses the installation of wells

What are Long-Term Mitigation Strategies and Actions?

Long-term, preventative measures that help mitigate drought and water shortage conditions

- **Drinking Water Well Mitigation Program:** Series of coordinated efforts that seek to reduce the vulnerability of domestic wells and state small water systems to water supply shortages
- **System Consolidation:** Physical or managerial joining of two or more systems that would include domestic wells and/or state small water systems
- **Regional Water Infrastructure Investment:** Participation in larger water supply projects to benefit domestic wells and state small water systems
- **Addressing Data Gaps:** Improving planning, forecasting, and monitoring of domestic well and state small water systems supplies

Discussion – Prior Water Shortages and Response

- What has been the experience of domestic well owners and state small water systems with water shortages or supply challenges? Were emergency measures or contingency plans implemented?
- What has worked in the past? What are some lessons learned that should be considered?
- What is the best approach for coordination with state agencies, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), or other partners during these events?

Next Steps

Anticipated Next Steps

(to be updated based on meeting discussion)

County Drought Task Force

- Review Draft Drought Resilience Plan (mid-February 2026)
- Task Force Meeting 2 scheduled for March 10, 2026

Additional Discussion and Questions

Resources

- Ventura County SB552 Website: [Small Water System and Domestic Wells Drought and Water Shortage Task Force - Ventura County Public Works Agency](#)
- DWR Risk Assessment Tool and Methodology: [Water Shortage Vulnerability Scoring and Tool](#)
- DWR Guidebook: [DWR County Drought Resilience Plan Guidebook](#)
- Questions or Concerns: SB552DroughtResiliencyPlan@venturacounty.gov