



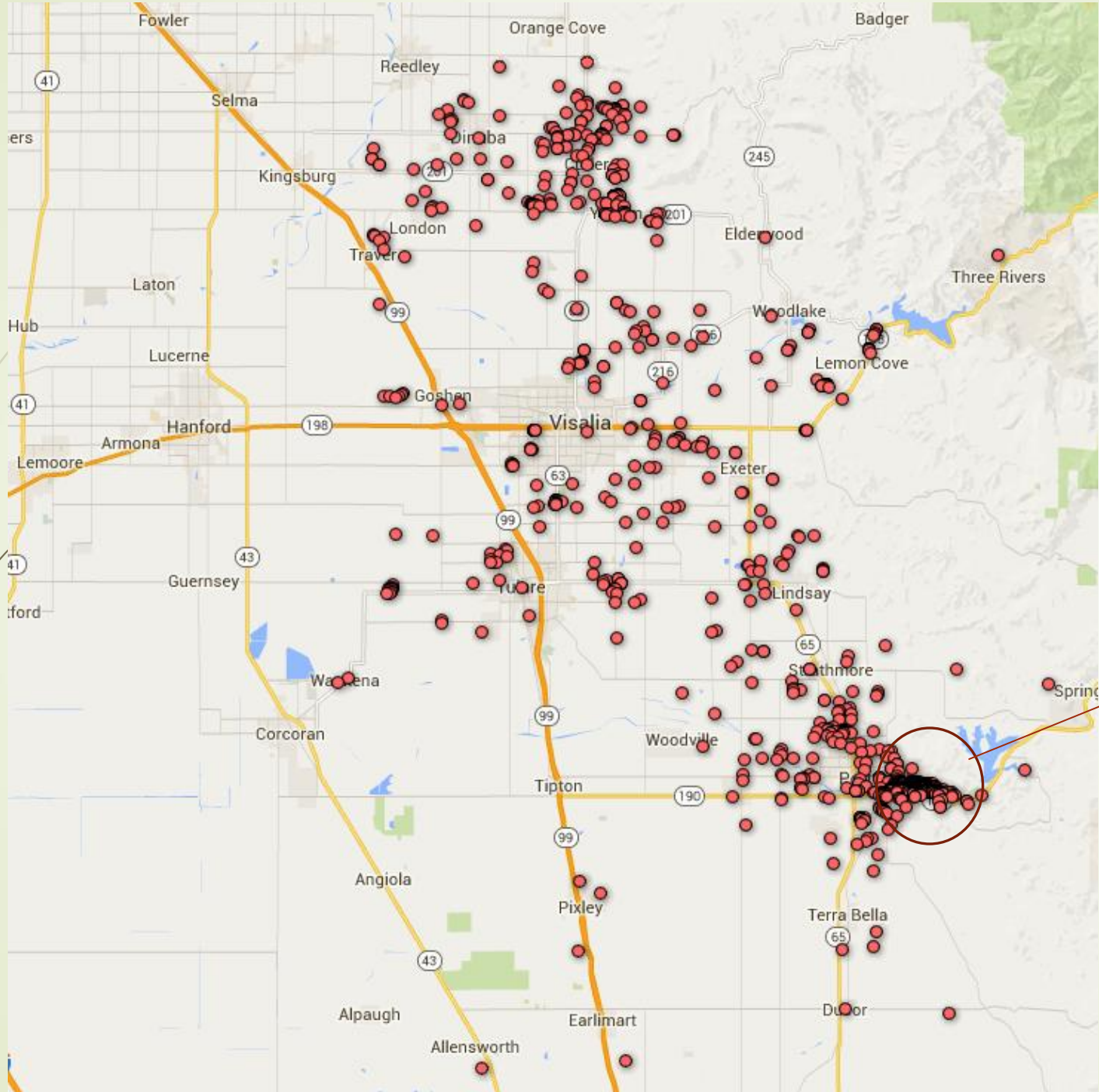
# Local Drought Impact

Tulare County's Experience with the Drought



# Local Status

- ▶ 1,562 reported domestic well failures (1,252 active)
  - ▶ Over 55% of all failures statewide
  - ▶ Over 5,000 people without water
- ▶ Local Emergency proclaimed February 4, 2014



Over 50% of failures are concentrated in East Porterville, an unincorporated area of Tulare County



# Information Gathering

- ▶ Citizen reporting
  - ▶ Online form
  - ▶ Tulare County 2-1-1 line
  - ▶ Calls and in-person reporting
- ▶ Community Survey
  - ▶ Major door-to-door survey in East Porterville community
- ▶ Reports from community partners



# Hurdles to Information Gathering

- ▶ Language barriers
  - ▶ False rumors
    - ▶ Evictions/red tagging
    - ▶ Child protective services
  - ▶ Citizenship status
  - ▶ Mistrust of government
  - ▶ Under-reporting
- 



# Community Impact of Drought

- ▶ Individuals/families/businesses without water
- ▶ Loss of work and reduction of working hours
  - ▶ The Workforce Investment Board reports 291 so far laid off or work hours reduced due to drought
- ▶ Agriculture impacts
  - ▶ Reduction in crop yields
  - ▶ Voluntary destruction of orchards & fallowing of fields
- ▶ Water contamination issues



# Additional effects

- ▶ Agricultural impact
    - ▶ Biomass disposal
    - ▶ Increased pests
  - ▶ Health Impact
    - ▶ West Nile Virus
    - ▶ Respiratory illness
  - ▶ Subsidence
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# Additional effects

- ▶ Administrative burdens
  - ▶ Processing/tracking/administering drought programs & grant funds
  - ▶ Well drilling permits
    - ▶ Issued twice as many permits in 2014 as in 2013 – 2015 on track to double again
  - ▶ Allocation of new staff positions dedicated to drought activities
    - ▶ Office of Emergency Services
    - ▶ Resource Management Agency
    - ▶ Environmental Health
    - ▶ Non-profit partner agencies





# Mitigations



- ▶ Rain is the only permanent solution
- ▶ Expansion of city water systems may offer some extended relief
  - ▶ Takes time, money, political will to extend infrastructure
  - ▶ City water systems not inexhaustible
- ▶ Bottled Drinking Water Program
- ▶ Household Tank Program
- ▶ Voluntary Relocation Programs
- ▶ Community Comfort Efforts



# Bottled Drinking Water Program

- ▶ Home delivery of bottled drinking water
  - ▶ 64oz. per person per day
- ▶ Household income limit - \$48,876
  - ▶ 80% of California median income
- ▶ Over 1,080 households currently participating




# Household Tank Program

- 2,500-gallon potable water tanks tied directly into home plumbing
- ~250 tanks already installed
  - ~35 tanks installed weekly
- Tanks refilled bi-weekly
- 1 tank per 3 people – provides 50 gallons/person/day



# Comfort Efforts

- ▶ Non-potable community water tanks
  - ▶ Community showers
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# Relocation Program

- Governor's executive order budgeted \$6 million
  - Guidelines drafted at state level
  - Local program in development
- Anticipate relocation expenses plus 12 months of rent differential



# Coordinated Response

- ▶ Tulare County Office of Emergency Services is the Lead Agency for Tulare drought response efforts
- ▶ Tulare County Drought Task Force
  - ▶ Tulare County government
  - ▶ Incorporated cities
  - ▶ Special districts
  - ▶ Non-profit organizations
  - ▶ Community volunteers
  - ▶ State of California



# Lessons Learned (so far)

- ▶ Share the burden of the response
  - ▶ Engage non-profits and community partners
  - ▶ Subject matter experts
- ▶ Centralize reporting
  - ▶ Tulare County United Way 2-1-1 line
- ▶ Build trust with the community and partner organizations/agencies
- ▶ Be prepared for cascading problems and innovative problem solving



# Thank You!

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