

Ventura River Watershed Litigation

Community Meeting
February 13, 2020

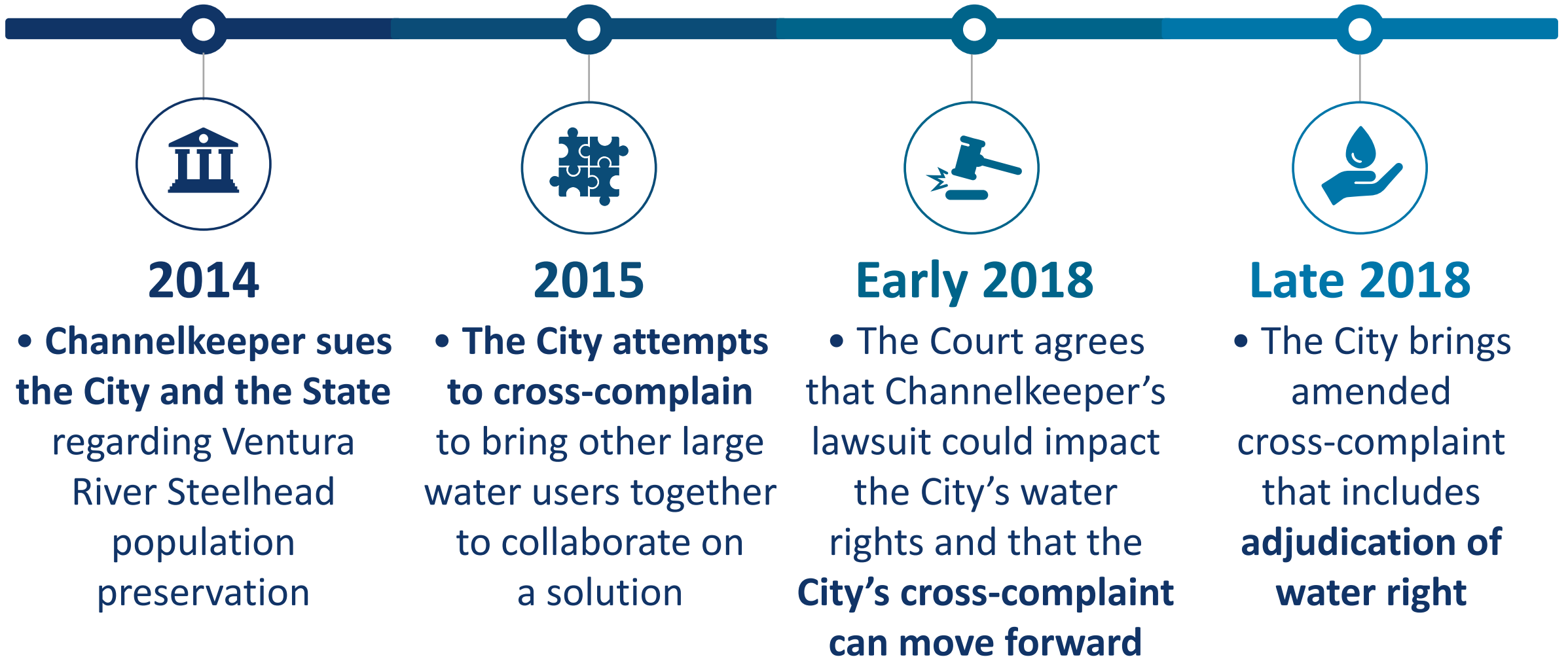
www.venturariver.com



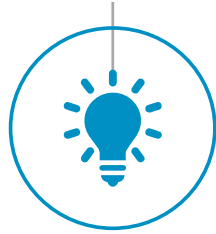
Ventura River Watershed Adjudication



Litigation Diagram



Litigation Diagram



2019

- The **City continues settlement discussions** with the other large water users named in cross-complaint to find a “physical solution”
- The City and Channelkeeper come to **interim settlement** that involves actionable **improvement plans** for the River’s infrastructure
- The **City moves forward with cross-complaint** believing it vital that a collaborative, enforceable solution be reached among all stakeholders
- In order for the Court to recognize any comprehensive settlement agreement, **State law** requires the City to send out **Notices/Summons** to all who may be impacted



2020

- **Notices and Summons go out**, as settlement discussions continue
- Because such a large group was included in this notification, **communication meetings** are being held to make sure all parties understand what is at stake and **why this is needed to protect water rights** now and in the future

Large Water Users

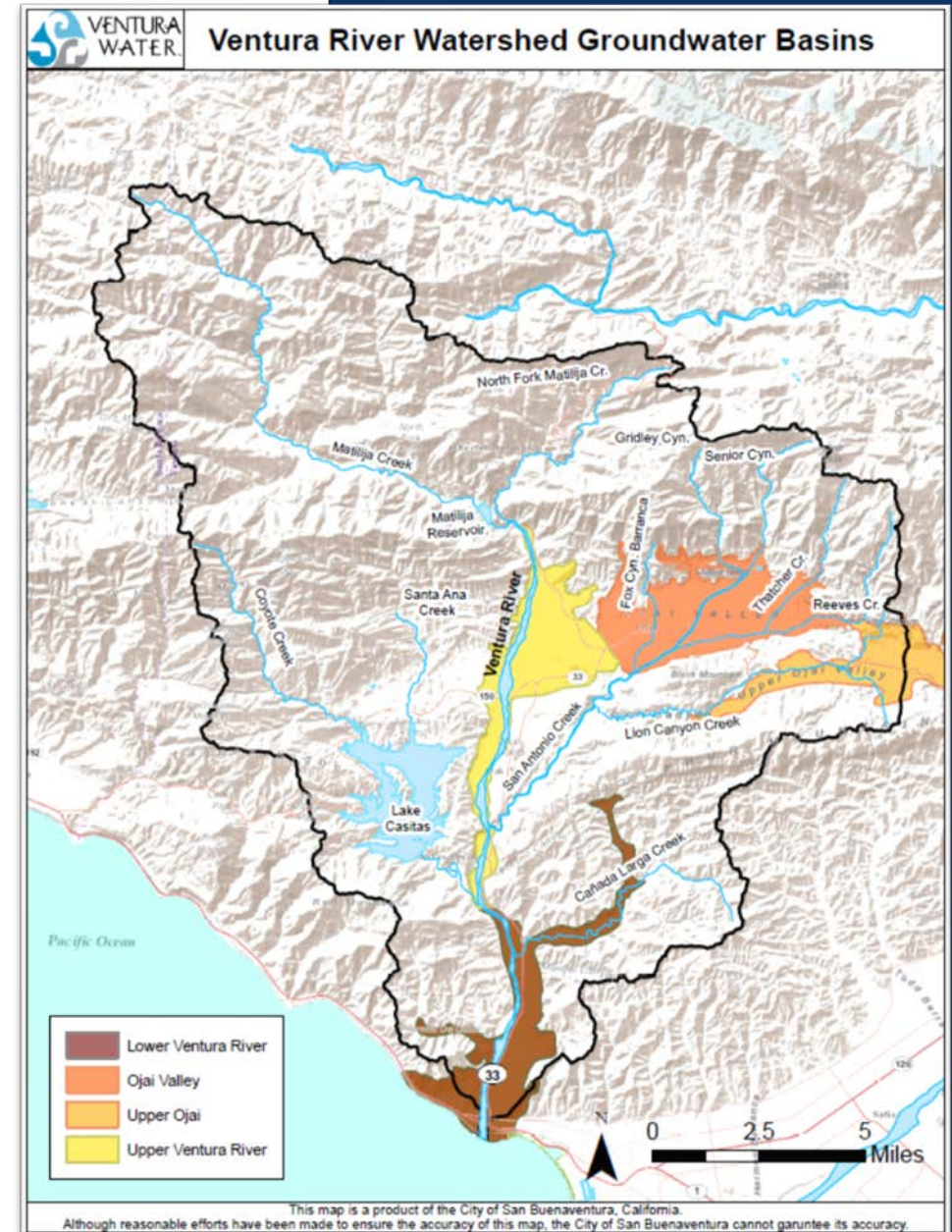
Municipal:

- Casitas Municipal Water District
- City of Ventura (Ventura Water)
- Ventura River Water District
- Meiners Oaks Water District

Agriculture:

- Taylor Ranch
- Rancho Matilija Mutual Water Company
- Other Farms / Ranches

Individual Wells



Sequence of Litigation

**Santa Barbara
Channelkeeper**

2014



State Agencies



City of Ventura

2020



Property Owners

2018



Large Water Users

NOTICE

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	9	Attorneys for Respondent and Cross-Complainant CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA	
	10	Attorneys for Respondent and Cross-Complainant CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA	
11	SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
12	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES		
13	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES		
14	SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER,	Case No. 19STCP01176	
15	a California non-profit corporation,	Judge: Honorable William F. Highberger	
16	Petitioner,	NOTICE OF COMMENCEMENT OF	
17	v.	GROUNDWATER BASIN AND	
18	STATE WATER RESOURCES	WATERSHED ADJUDICATION	
19	CONTROL BOARD, a California State	CMC: June 1, 2020	
20	Agency:	Time: 1:30 p.m.	
21	CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a	Dept: SS10	
22	California municipal corporation,	Action Filed: Sept. 19, 2014	
23	incorrectly named as CITY OF	Trial Date: Not Set	
24	BUENAVENTURA,		
25	Respondents.		
26	CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a		
27	California municipal corporation,		
28	Cross-Complainant		
	v.		
	DUNCAN ABBOTT, an individual, et al.		
	Cross-Defendants.		
	82470.0001832405188.3	-1-	
	Notice of Commencement of Groundwater Basin and Watershed Adjudication		

SUMMONS

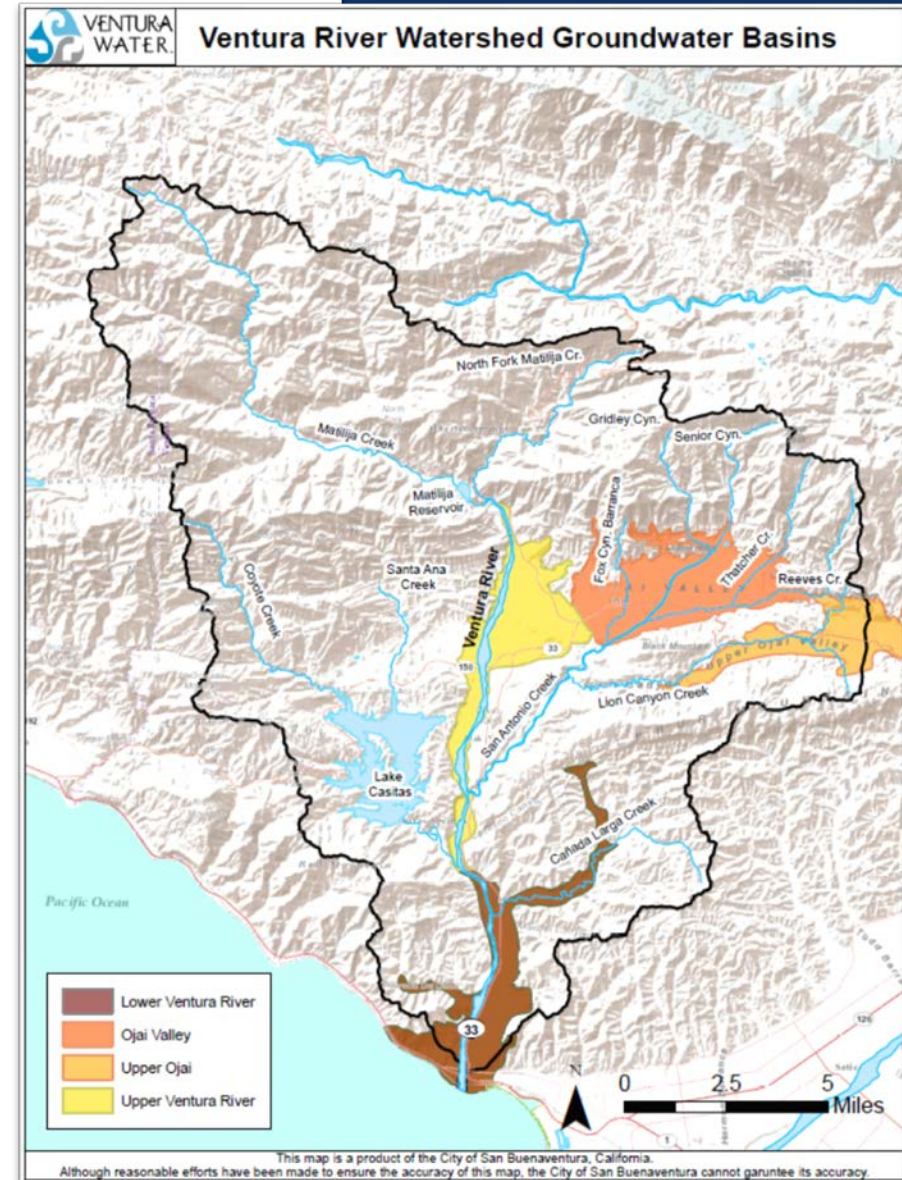
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12	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES			
13	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES			
14	SANTA BARBARA CHANNELKEEPER,	Case No. 19STCP01176		
15	a California non-profit corporation,	Judge: Honorable William F. Highberger		
16	Petitioner,	Deemed Verified Pursuant to Cal. Civ. Proc.		
17	v.	Code § 446		
18	STATE WATER RESOURCES	RESPONDENT AND CROSS-		
19	CONTROL BOARD, a California State	COMPLAINANT CITY OF SAN		
20	Agency:	BUENAVENTURA'S THIRD AMENDED		
21	CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a	CROSS-COMPLAINT FOR:		
22	California municipal corporation,	1. VIOLATION OF REASONABLE USE;		
23	incorrectly named as CITY OF	2. VIOLATION OF PUBLIC TRUST;		
24	BUENAVENTURA,	3. DECLARATORY RELIEF - PUEBLO		
25	Respondents.	AND/OR TREATY WATER RIGHTS;		
26	CITY OF SAN BUENAVENTURA, a	4. DECLARATORY RELIEF -		
27	California municipal corporation,	PREScriptive WATER RIGHTS;		
28	Cross-Complainant	5. DECLARATORY RELIEF -		
	v.	APPROPRIATIVE WATER RIGHTS;		
	DUNCAN ABBOTT,	6. COMPREHENSIVE ADJUDICATION;		
	AGR BREEDING, INC.;	7. DECLARATORY RELIEF - MUNICIPAL		
	[continued on next page]	PRIORITY;		
		8. DECLARATORY RELIEF - HUMAN		
		RIGHT TO WATER; and		
		9. DECLARATORY RELIEF		
	82470.0001832392562.1	- 1 -		
	City's 3rd Am. Cross-Compl.			

Who received the Notice?

All property owners who own property that overlie (is above) the four groundwater basins in the Ventura River Watershed

Who received the Summons?

All property owners who own property that is next to the Ventura River or its tributaries



What does it mean if I received a Notice?

- You have not been sued
- Your water service will not be interrupted
- City was required to send you the Notice as part of the court process

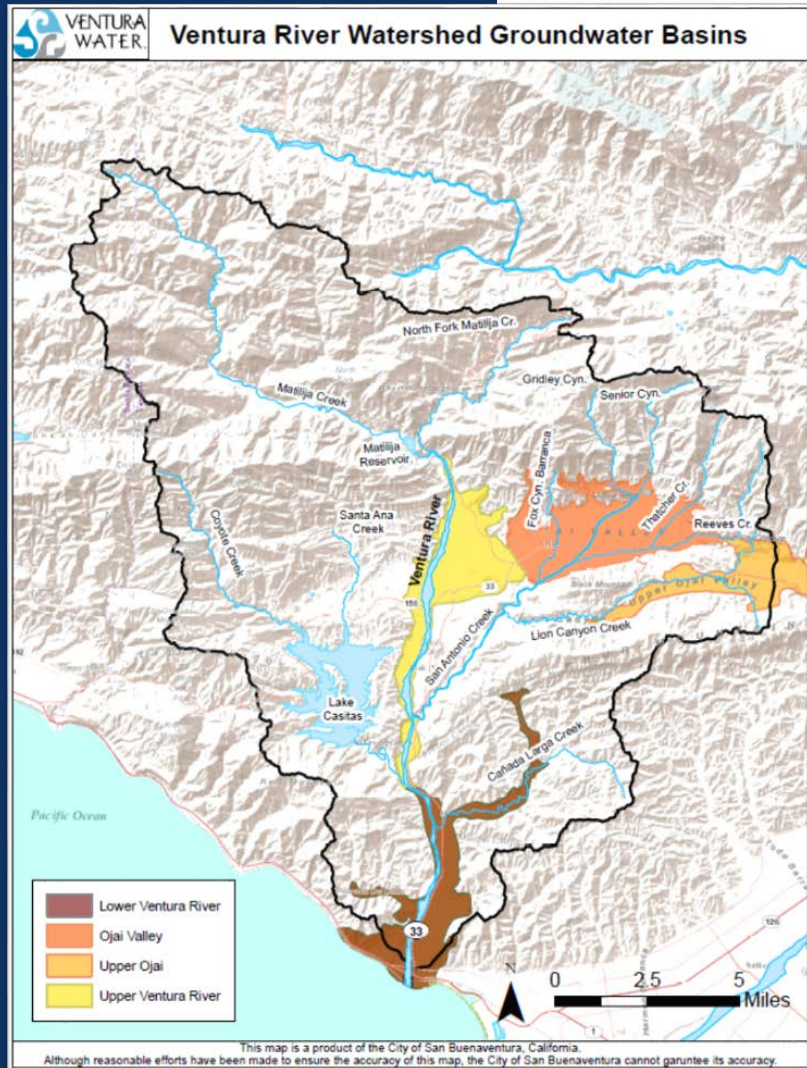
What does it mean if I received a Summons?

- You have been sued
- You have 60 days to respond if you would like to participate
(City is currently seeking 6 month extension)
- Current action won't interrupt service from your current water provider
- City was required to include you as part of the court process

Do I need an Attorney?

- You may wish to consult an attorney:
 - If you currently have a groundwater well
 - Take water from the river
 - Or wish to do so in the future
- The outcome could impact your right to divert, pump or store surface water or groundwater, either now or in the future
- If you do not wish to participate, you can choose to ignore the Notice/Summons

What the City Hopes to Achieve



- Working towards a collaborative solution (settlement) known as a “physical solution”

The City’s goal is to work collaboratively to develop a locally driven solution that:

- Avoids State intervention
- Balances river habitat with water needs of region
- Shares the responsibility of protecting this finite water supply among all users
- Develop user group similar to Santa Paula Basin

Legal Fees and Costs

Between **2014-2020** approximately **5 million** has been spent toward legal fees, studies and analyses, and an interim settlement agreement.

Approximately
\$2 MILLION
has been spent on
LEGAL COUNSEL

Approximately
\$2 MILLION
has been spent on
**STUDIES AND
ANALYSES OF THE RIVER**

\$850k
on the interim
settlement agreement
with Santa Barbara
Channelkeeper in 2019

As one of the large water users of the River, the City of Ventura has taken the lead on keeping local control for all of its users. It is why the City took on the legal process, which was a necessary step to ensure that a binding, collaborative solution was agreed upon by all water users.



Progress & The Path Forward

- **Website dedicated to this issue** with comprehensive FAQ, timeline, and videos (www.venturariver.com)
- **Mailer to all impacted parties** notifying them of resources and where to find more information
- **Holding public meetings**
(more to be scheduled as talks progress)
- **Participating in ongoing, collaborative discussions**
- **Seeking a 6 month extension** for those deciding to participate, while continuing to work on settlement



Takeaways

- If you receive municipal water, current action does not affect you
- Current action won't interrupt service from your current water provider
- City is seeking a 6-month extension so settlement may be reached
- Continue to visit www.venturariver.com for updates

Ventura River Watershed Adjudication

