



## Water task force may limit well-tapping

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SANTA MARIA, CA — The Nipomo Mesa Water Task Force will recommend to the Nipomo Community Services District (NCSD) whether to limit who gets to tap into its wells in the future, a measure that could affect the pace of growth in the area, [The Santa Maria Times](#) reported.

In expectation of this decision, the NCSD has put a hold on all new guarantees for future water service, known as "intent to serve" letters, while the task force wades through five reports and a court ruling to determine just how much water is available in Nipomo, the article said.

David Church, with the county's Local Agency Formation Commission, who went through a similar process when he had to revise the boundaries for Nipomo, told the paper that he called it the "great water mystery of Nipomo."

The controversy revolves around the word "overdraft." A basin is in overdraft when the amount of water being extracted exceeds the amount of water needed on an ongoing basis. What is unclear is what constitutes proof of overdraft, the paper said.

Some say that an analysis of water supply and demand conducted over a significant period, including both wet and dry periods, is enough to determine if a basin is in overdraft. Others say actual physical harm due to the overdraft must be proven for the label to be attached to a basin, the paper reported.

San Luis Obispo County's most recent study declares that the Mesa is in overdraft, but the court presiding over a complex groundwater lawsuit involving the NCSD ruled that it is not, based on lack of physical evidence, according to the article.

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