Exempt Wells and Sportsmen: What's the Connection?

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WPIC Choteau, Montana
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TROUT UNLIMITED'S MISSION IS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT AND RESTORE NORTH AMERICA'S COLDWATER FISHERIES AND THEIR WATERSHEDS

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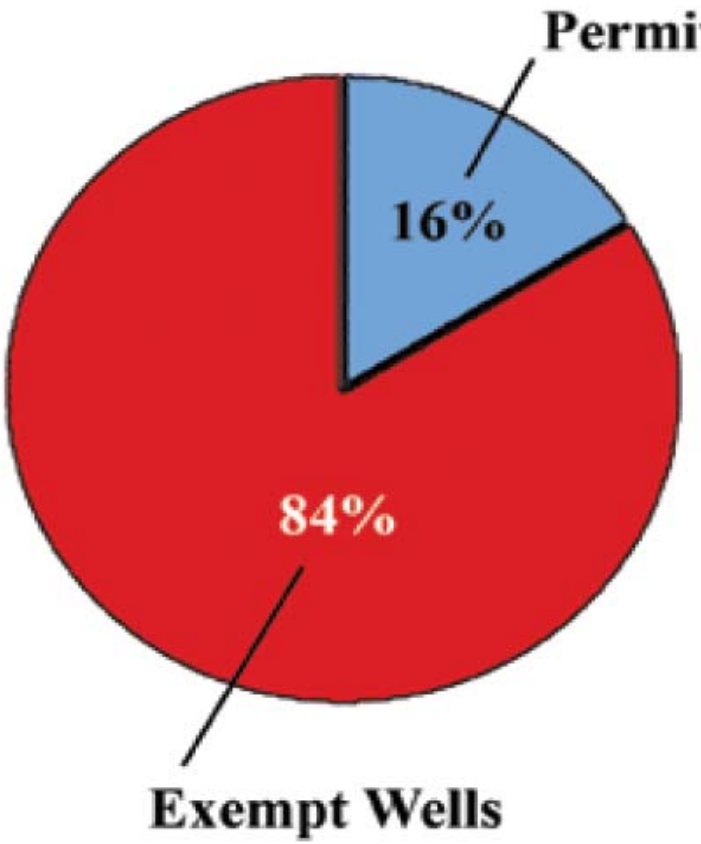
Sportsmen and Exempt Wells?



200,640 Total Wells

(as of October 2006)

Exempt Wells Are a Water Grab

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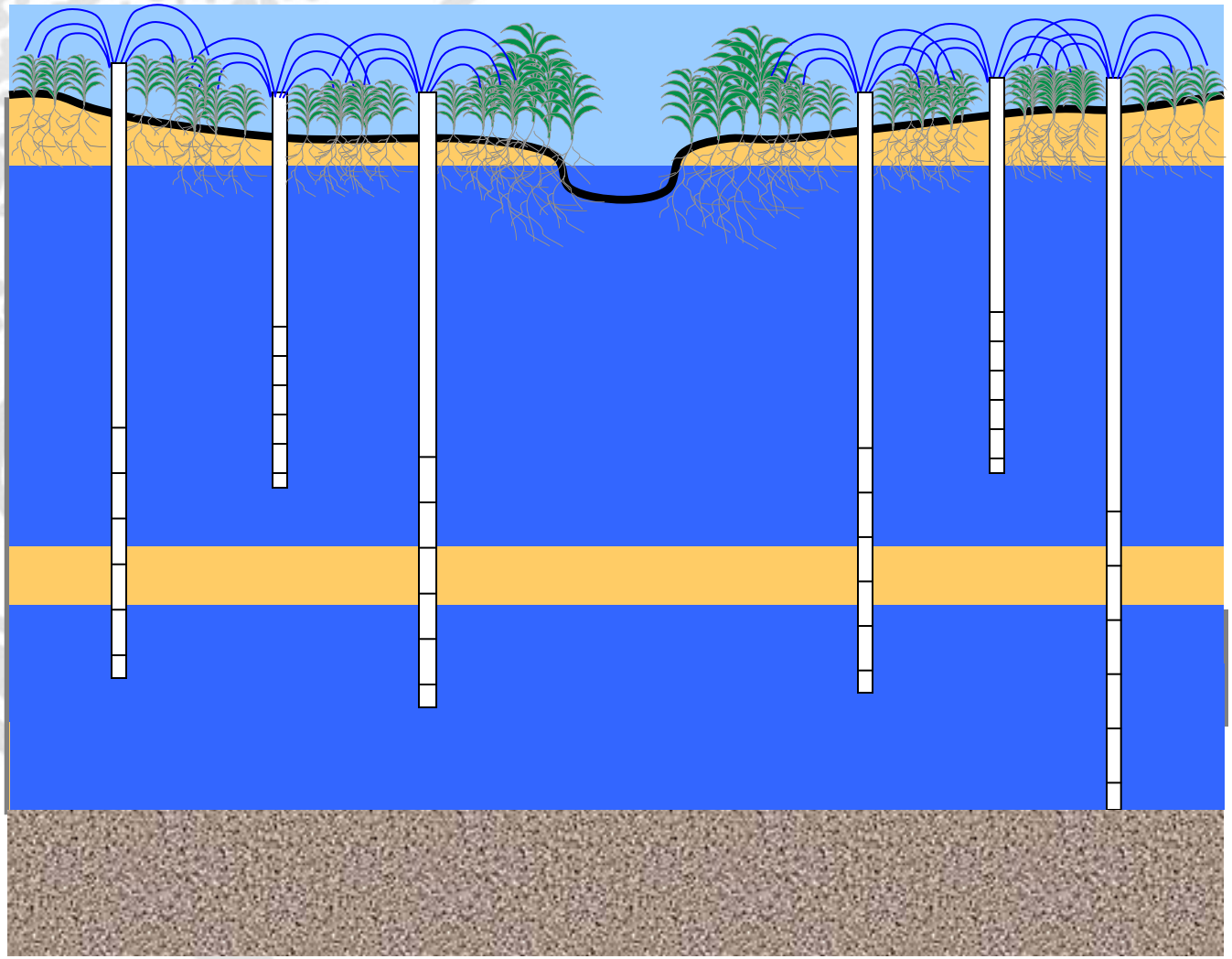
We Live in the Top Two Feet



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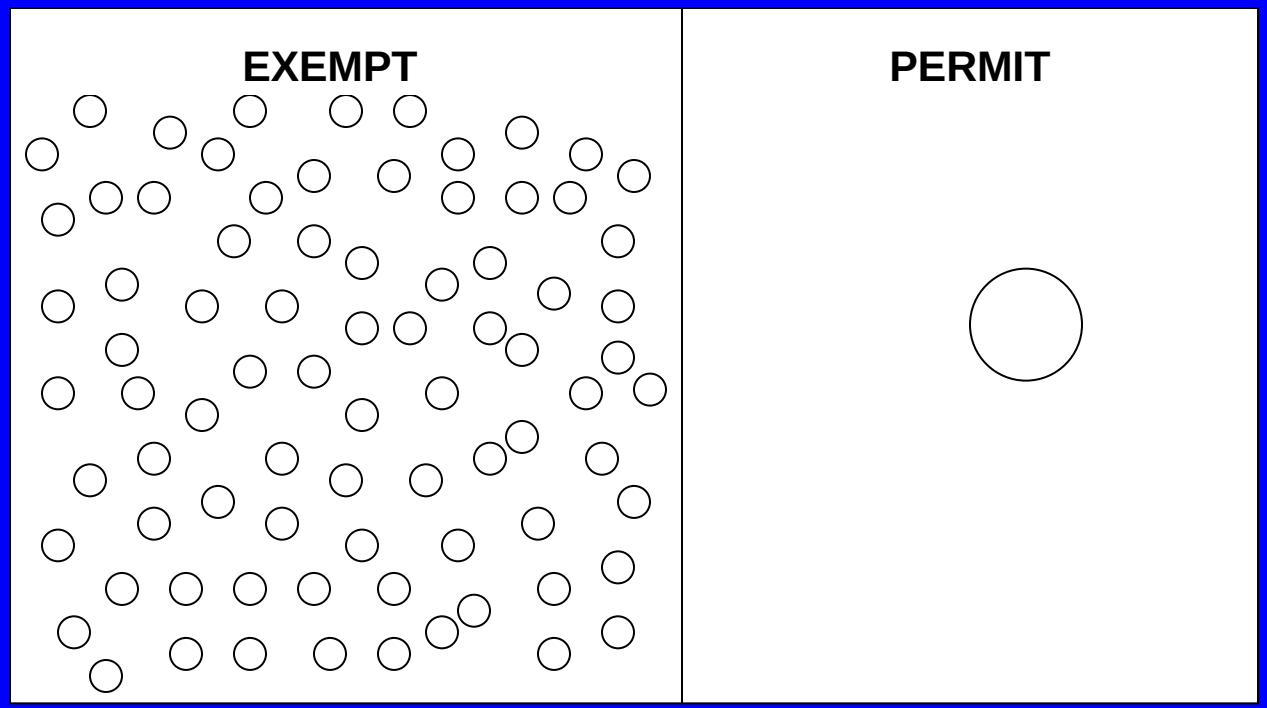
No Mitigation for Exempt Wells' Depletion



Solution A: Mitigation Water Bank

- Individual Wells Purchase Mitigation Credit
- Counties Purchase Senior Surface Water Rights to provide Mitigation Water Credits
- Working in Bend, Oregon and Eastern Washington

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Solution B: Require Permitting

- Impose irrigated acreage limitation at 1/2 acre-foot
- Require subdivided parcels with individual wells to go through permitting

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Streamline HB 831 Permitting with “Bucket-for-Bucket” Mitigation under Section 15(1)

“Sticker Shock: $1 Billion for Water”

- Rocky Mountain News, September 26, 2007
- Denver’s southern suburbs must spend $1billion to wean themselves off cheap groundwater that fueled rapid growth in the 1980’s and 1990’s.

Highlands Ranch, South of Denver

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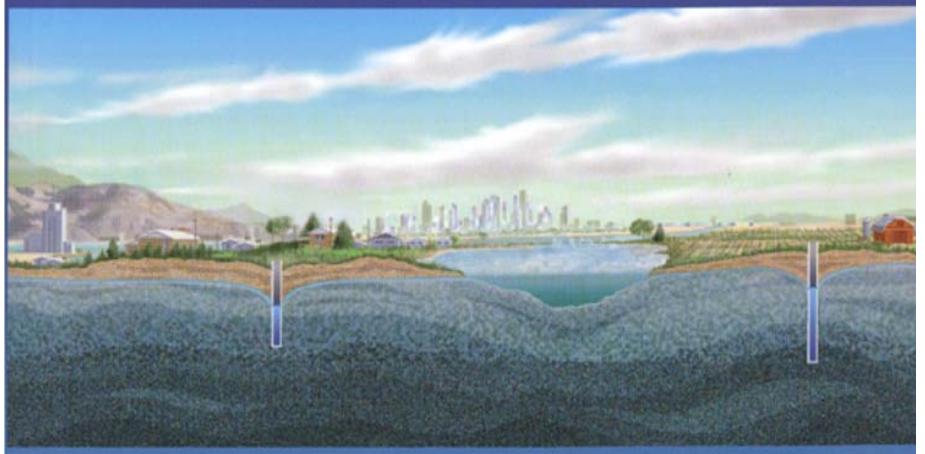
USGS
science for a changing world

Sustainability of Ground-Water Resources



U.S. Geological Survey Circular 1186

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1942 Photo of Santa Cruz River, Tucson, AZ

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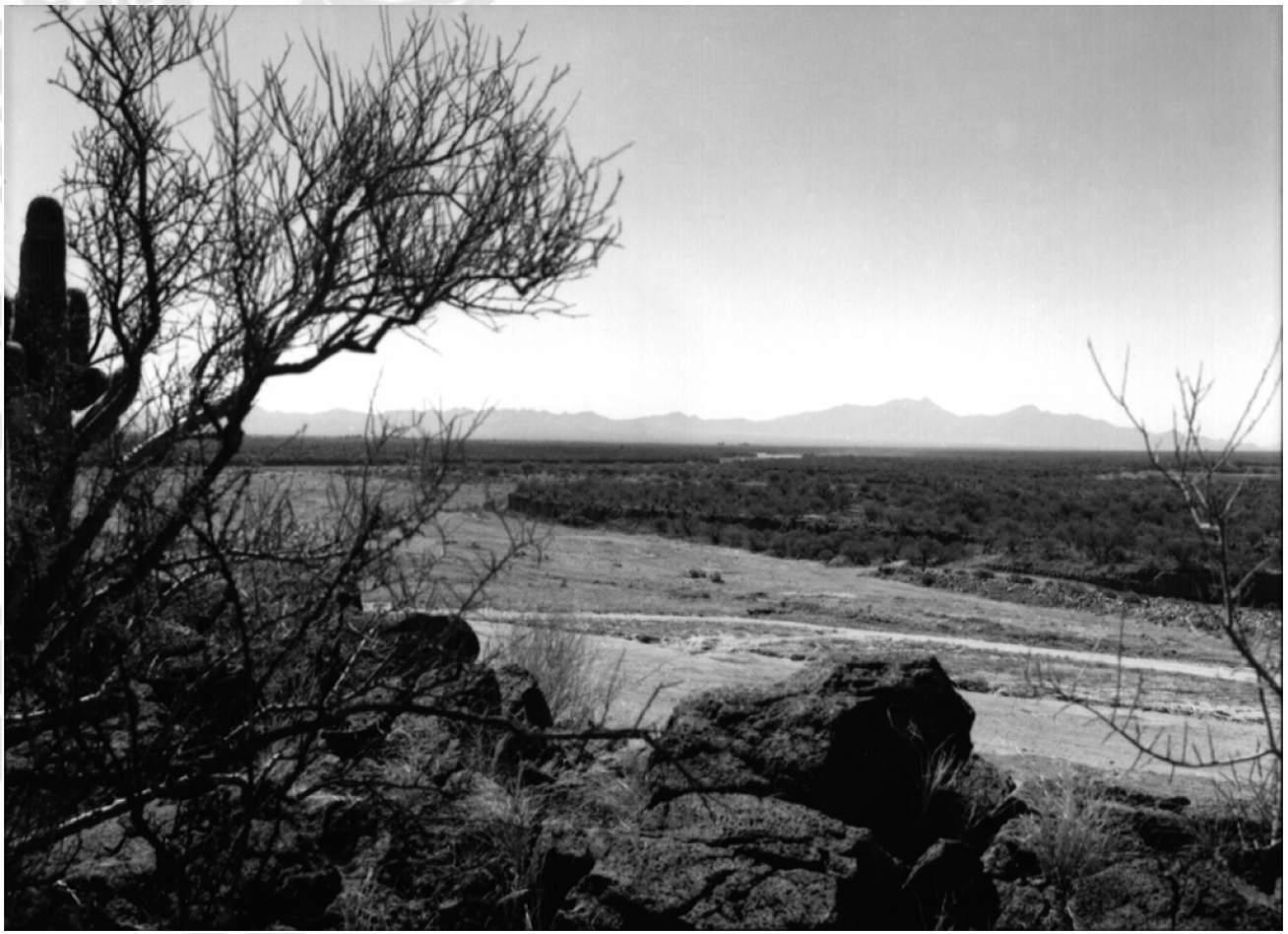
1989 photo reflecting 100-foot drop in water table



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