

The Politics of Local Water Management

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Dougherty Valley

An aerial photograph of Dougherty Valley, California. The foreground is filled with a dense residential development featuring numerous houses with light-colored siding and reddish-brown roofs. A winding road cuts through the middle of the valley. In the background, there are rolling green hills and a large, prominent mountain range under a sky with scattered white clouds.



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- Environmentalists fought development through EBMUD more than through county
 - Lower campaign costs
 - Alameda County overlap

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- EBMUD agrees to annex Dougherty Valley if no alternative provider by 2002

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- 1995: Fight shifts to “shadow agency” Zone 7

Dougherty Valley: Politics of Water and Land Use

"There are two very different views of what Zone 7 should be. On the one hand, some people believe it should be a utility—providing as much water as anyone wants, no matter the cost. People at the other extreme view the agency as the ultimate growth management tool. In reality it's neither. I think we should educate people that there is a finite amount to this resource. Then there are two options: we can stop developing, or we can spend more money for more water **after getting an approval from voters.**"

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“The way I explain this to people is if East Bay MUD supplies this project, we will have the increased air quality impacts, the increased traffic impacts on this hand. On this hand, we have the increased air quality impacts, traffic, and \$100 million.”

Lessons on the Politics of Local Water Management

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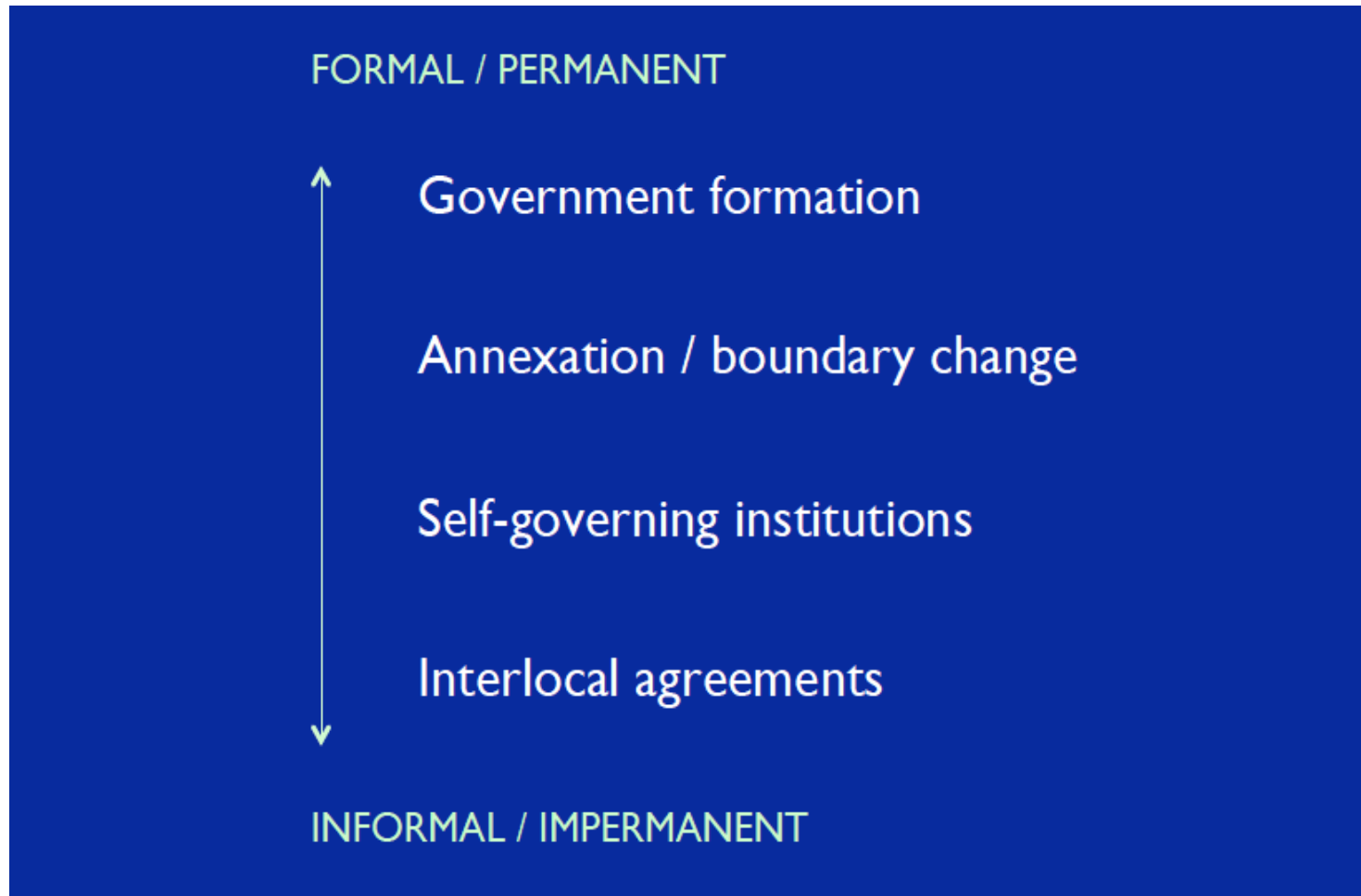
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- Don't try to build in the Bay Area.

How to Promote Cooperation in Groundwater Management?



Mechanisms to Facilitate Local Cooperation



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- But must keep in mind the additional transaction costs (bargaining, decision, monitoring and enforcement) introduced by representation.

Metropolitan Planning Organizations as a Model?

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- Responsible for allocating federal and state transportation funds.

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Function	Project funding	Regulation

Factors that Promote Regional Orientation among MPOs

- Lower % elected officials as board members
- Larger staff
- Independent staff
- More state involvement in setting goals and agenda

(Gerber and Gibson 2009; Mullin, Niemeier, and Feiock n.p.)

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- High levels of fragmentation may interfere.
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- More formal local arrangements may reduce costs of trades at other scales.

Thank you

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