

Framing Energy and Water (and Climate) Issues: Critical Links

National Academy/BEES Energy/Water
Forum, Washington DC



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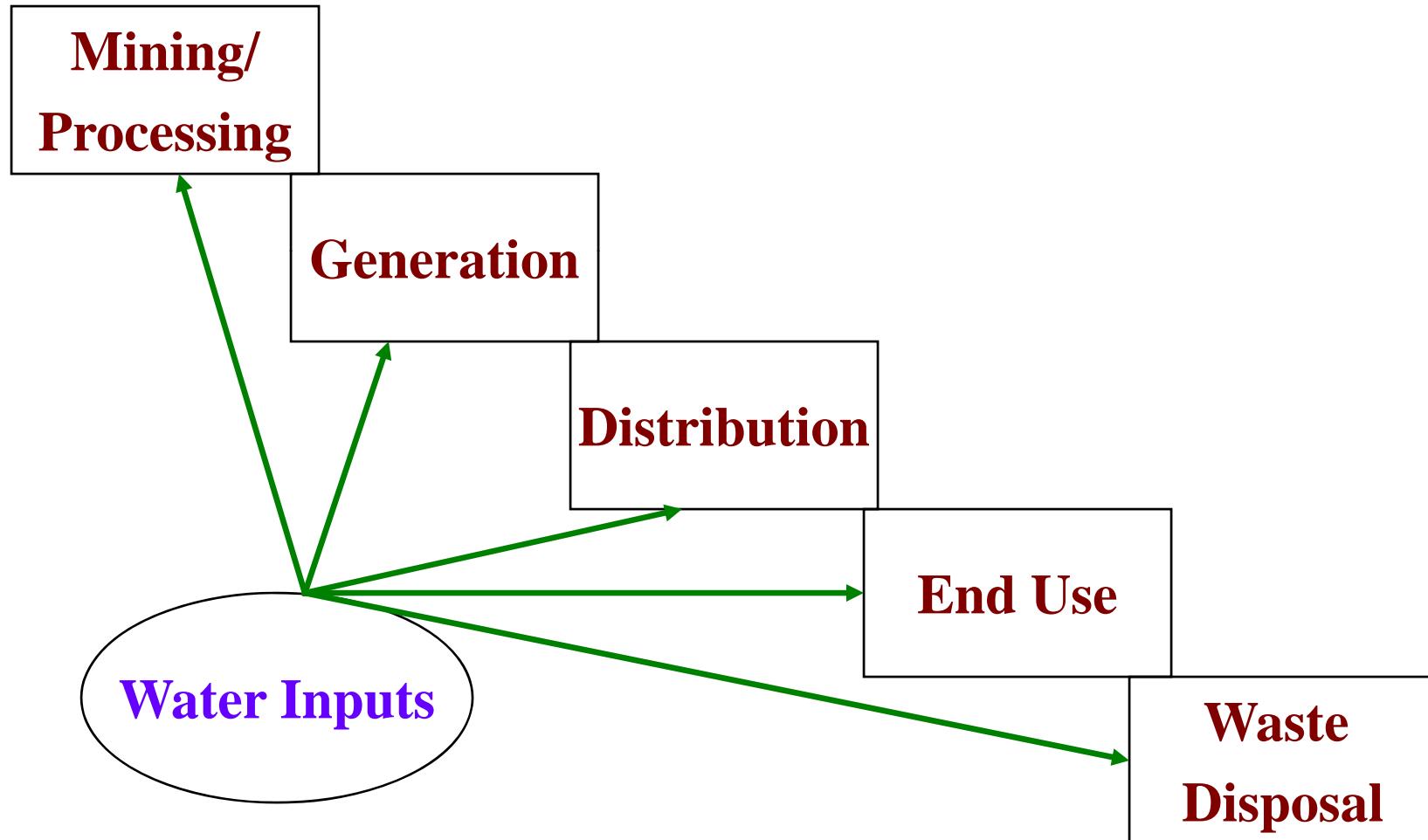
Overview

- ◆ Water and energy
- ◆ Water, energy, and climate
- ◆ Integration of the “nexus” into policy
- ◆ Water and security: some thoughts

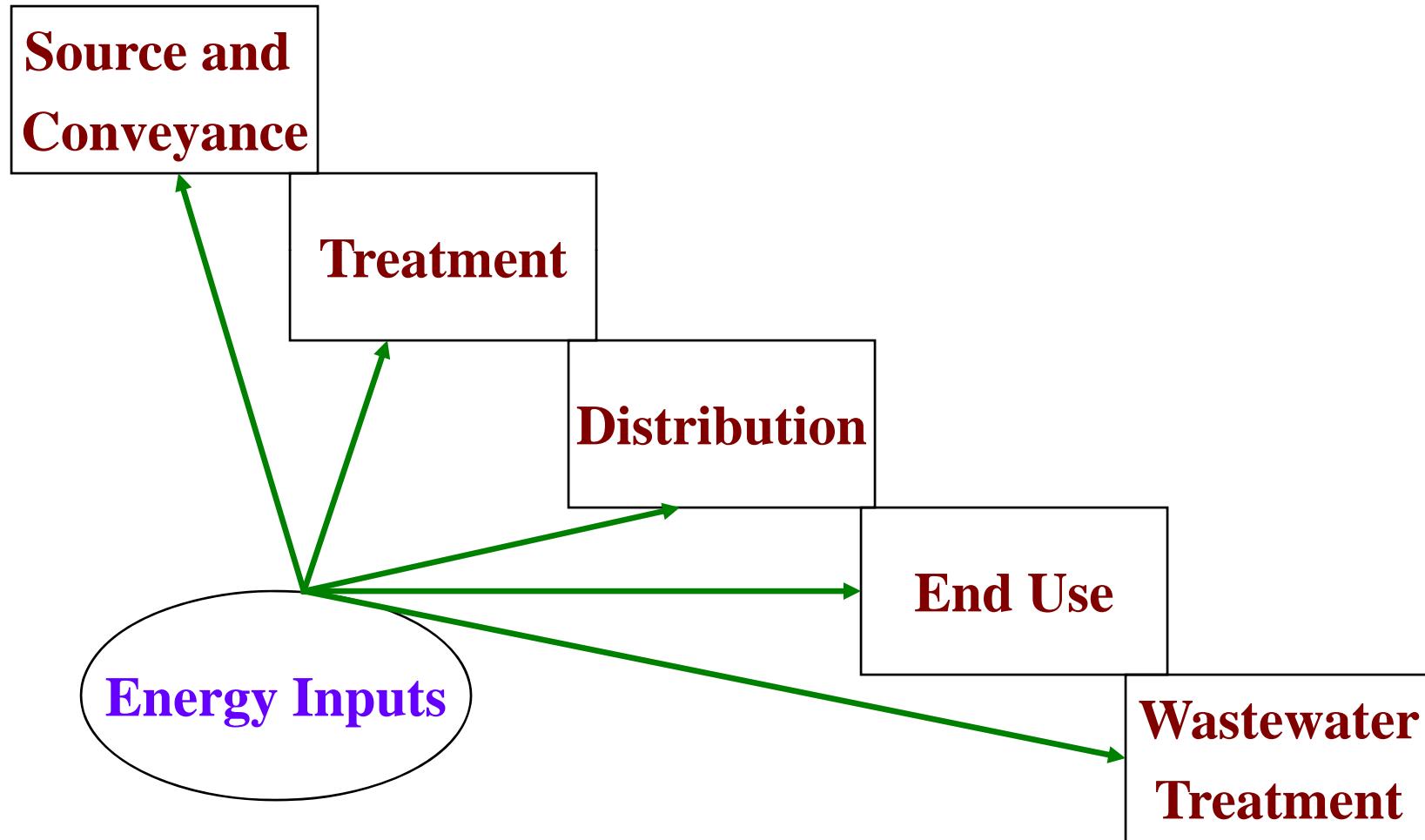
Conclusions

- ◆ Water use and energy use are closely linked.
- ◆ Limits to each are beginning to affect the other;
Yet energy and water issues are rarely integrated in policy.
- ◆ Considering them together offers substantial economic and environmental benefits.
- ◆ The reality of climate change affects policies in both areas.
- ◆ There are growing risks of conflicts over water.

Energy systems require water



Water systems require energy



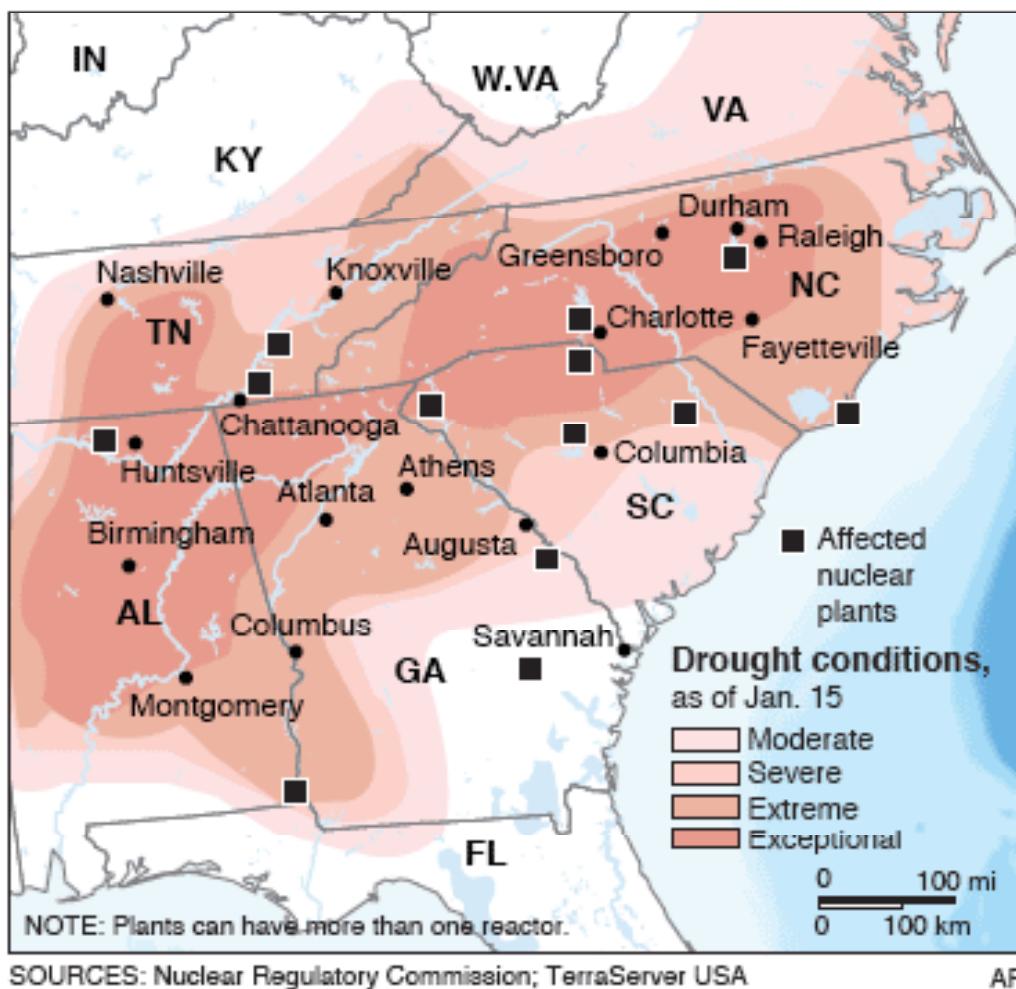
Water constraints for energy

- ◆ **Drought Could Force Nuke-Plant Shutdowns**
– *The Associated Press*, January 2008
- ◆ **Sinking Water and Rising Tensions**
– *EnergyBiz Insider*, December 2007
- ◆ **Stricter Standards Apply to Coal Plant, Judge Rules; Cooling Towers for Oak Creek**
– *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, November 2007
- ◆ **Journal-Constitution Opposes Coal-Based Plant, Citing Water Shortage**
– *The Atlanta Journal-Constitution*, October 2007
- ◆ **Maryland County denies cooling water to proposed power plant**
– *E-Water News Weekly*, October 2007
- ◆ **Water woes loom as thirsty generators face climate change.** *Greenwire*, September 2007

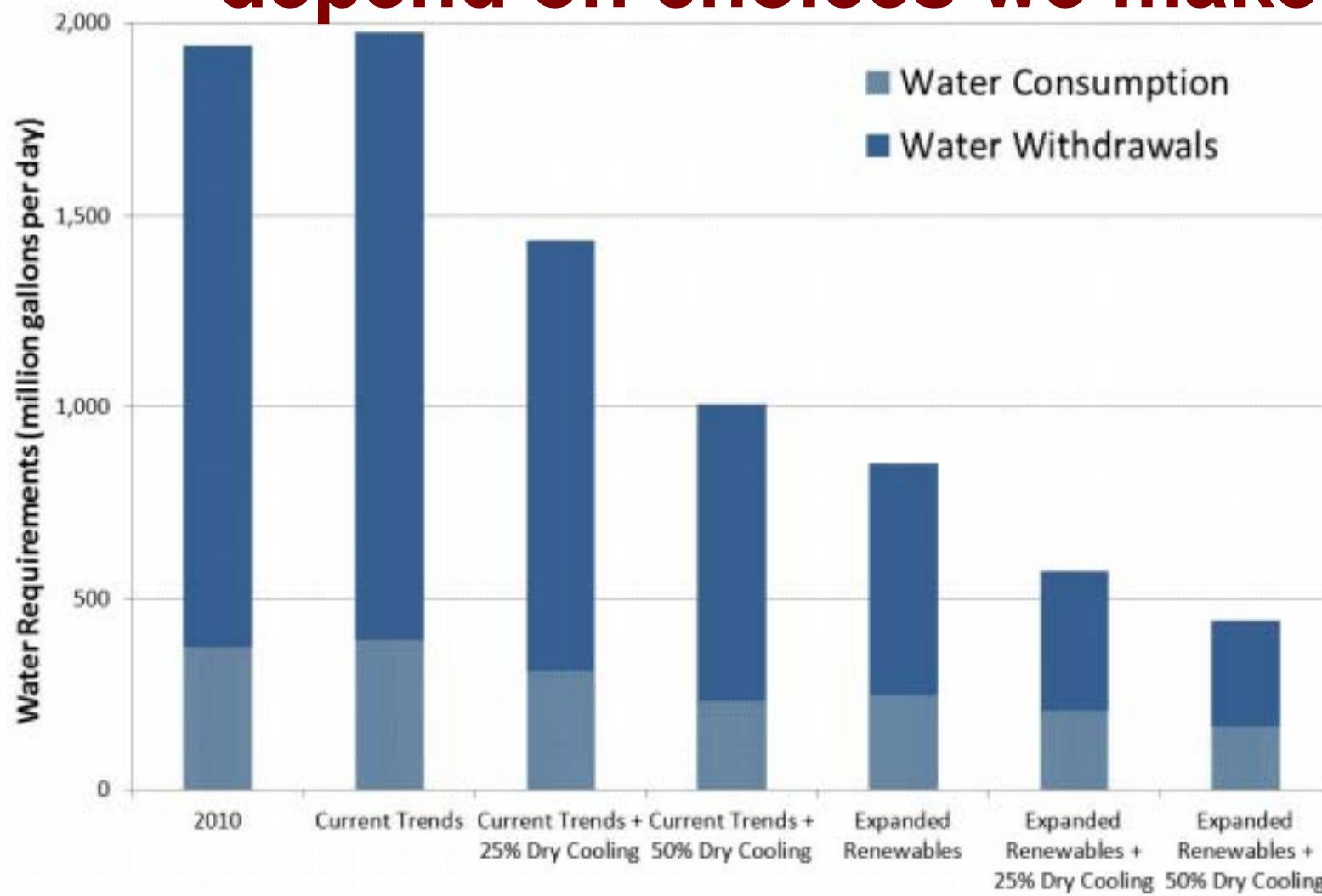
Water constraints for energy

Drought affecting nuclear plants

Twenty-four of the nation's 104 nuclear reactors are in areas experiencing the most severe levels of drought. Rivers and lakes supply power plants with the cooling water necessary to operate.

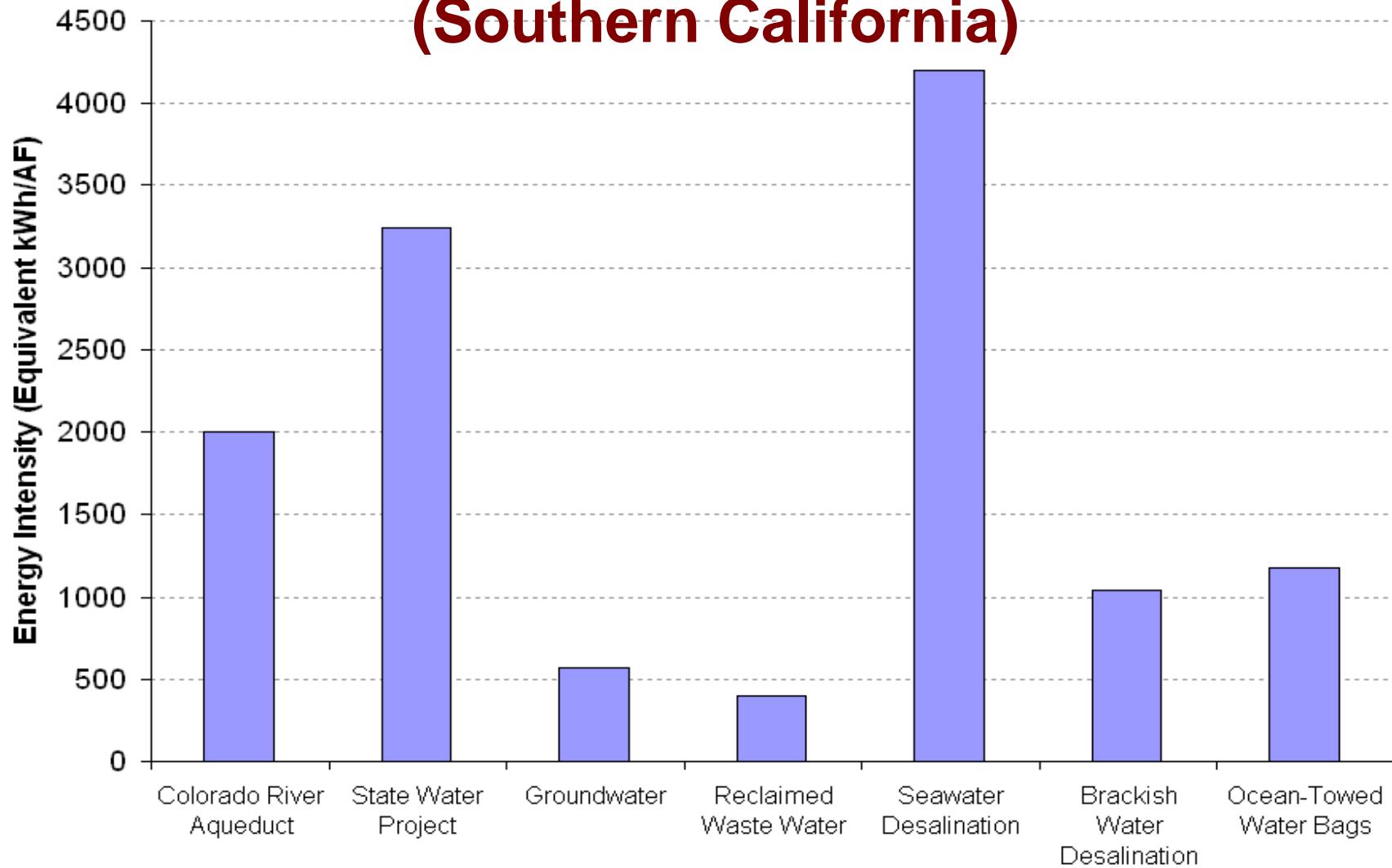


Water demands for energy systems depend on choices we make



Cooley et al. 2011. "Future water needs for electricity in the Intermountain West." Pacific Institute, Oakland, California.

Water-supply energy intensities (Southern California)



Source: Pacific Institute, "Energy Down the Drain," 2004

Energy for water: The California State Water Project (SWP)

- ◆ The SWP is the single largest user of energy in California.
- ◆ It requires an average of 5 billion kWh_e /yr to operate.
- ◆ Pumping 1 acre-foot of water through the system to Los Angeles requires 3,000 kWh_e.

[1 acre-foot is 326,000 gallons or 1233 cubic meters]

Some key energy-water connections

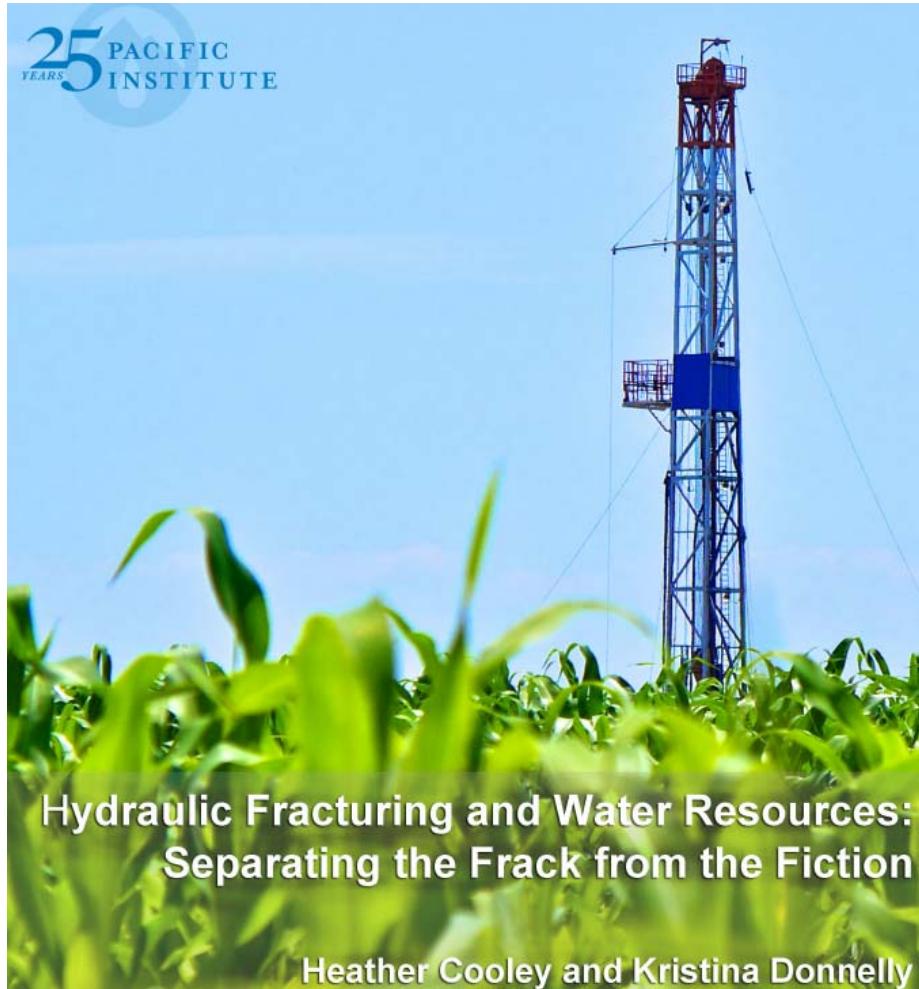
- ◆ Running a hot-water faucet for five minutes uses the same energy as lighting a 60W incandescent light bulb for 14 hours.
- ◆ California is beginning to regulate greenhouse gas emissions, including from water utilities.
- ◆ Some of the cheapest energy efficiency savings can come through water-efficiency programs instead. (CEC)

The climate link

- ◆ All of these water-energy links also have a climate change link, through the emission of greenhouse gases.
- ◆ Some climate change – perhaps significant climate change – is already unavoidable.
- ◆ We must move to avoid those consequences we cannot manage; and learn to manage those impacts we cannot avoid.

Policy implications

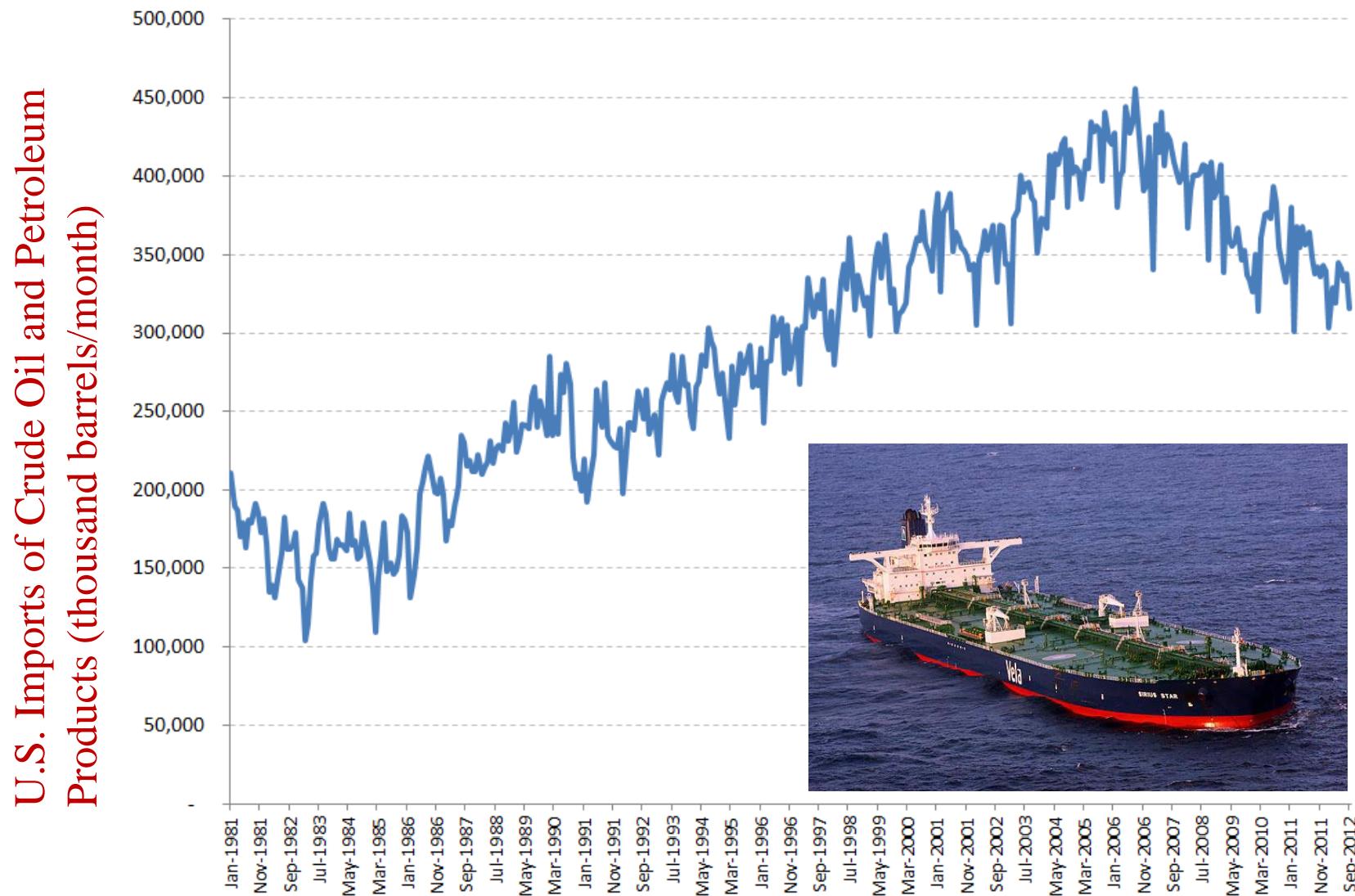
- ◆ Water and energy are tightly linked, but these links are poorly understood and rarely used in policy.
 - Decision makers and corporations should better integrate energy issues into water policy *AND* water issues into energy policy.
- ◆ Failure to link these issues will *inevitably* lead to disruptions in the supply of both water and power.



The science/hydrology of fracking is uncertain; data are scarce or proprietary. But the debate is about far more than science...

Sources: Pacific Institute 2012; Celsias; upthejones.com

Fracking and international security



USEIA. 2012. <http://www.eia.gov/dnav/pet/hist/LeafHandler.ashx?n=PET&s=MTTIMUS1&f=M>

“Peak Water,” security, and conflict

- ◆ Definitions of “security” vary, and are expanding.
- ◆ There is a long history of conflicts over fresh water.
- ◆ Such conflicts take many forms (as a goal, weapon, target, development disputes, terrorism).
- ◆ The risks of water-related disputes are growing, including over “peak water” constraints of all kinds.
- ◆ These water-related factors will have both direct and indirect impacts on security and conflict.

Cases of Water-Related Violence, 1931-2012 Involving State-to-State and Subnational Actors



New Concerns at the Intersection of Water/Energy/Security?

- ◆ Water and economic development: poverty, water allocations, and rights.
- ◆ Subnational, state-to-state, ethnic, local disputes are all increasingly common.
- ◆ Water-related acts of terrorism.
- ◆ Direct and indirect impacts of climate change.

Summary and recommendations

- ◆ There are strong and growing links between water, energy, climate, and security.
- ◆ We rarely consider integrated policies to address these links.
- ◆ The failure to address them will lead to inappropriate actions and unnecessary risks.
- ◆ Smart policies can be efficient and effective.

Summary and recommendations

- ◆ Energy choices must now consider water availability.
- ◆ Water-efficiency efforts offer substantial water (and energy) savings at lower cost, and faster, than new “supply.”
- ◆ Water and energy strategies can both lead to fast, cost-effective greenhouse-gas emissions reductions.

A TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY U.S. WATER POLICY



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