



Epidemiology & PHEP

Integrating Epidemiology and Emergency Preparedness in
Tulare County, CA

07.19.2017

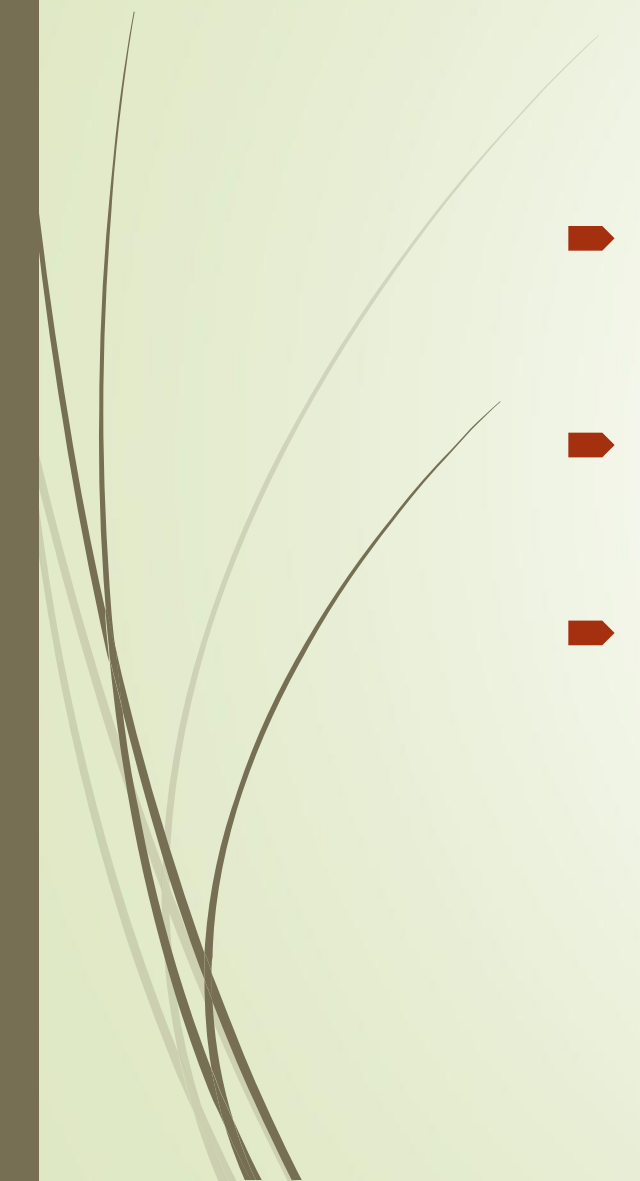


A Little Bit about Tulare County





Tulare County

- Located in California's Central Valley
 - Population ~450,000
 - Predominantly agricultural
 - Largest agricultural producing county in United States in 2014
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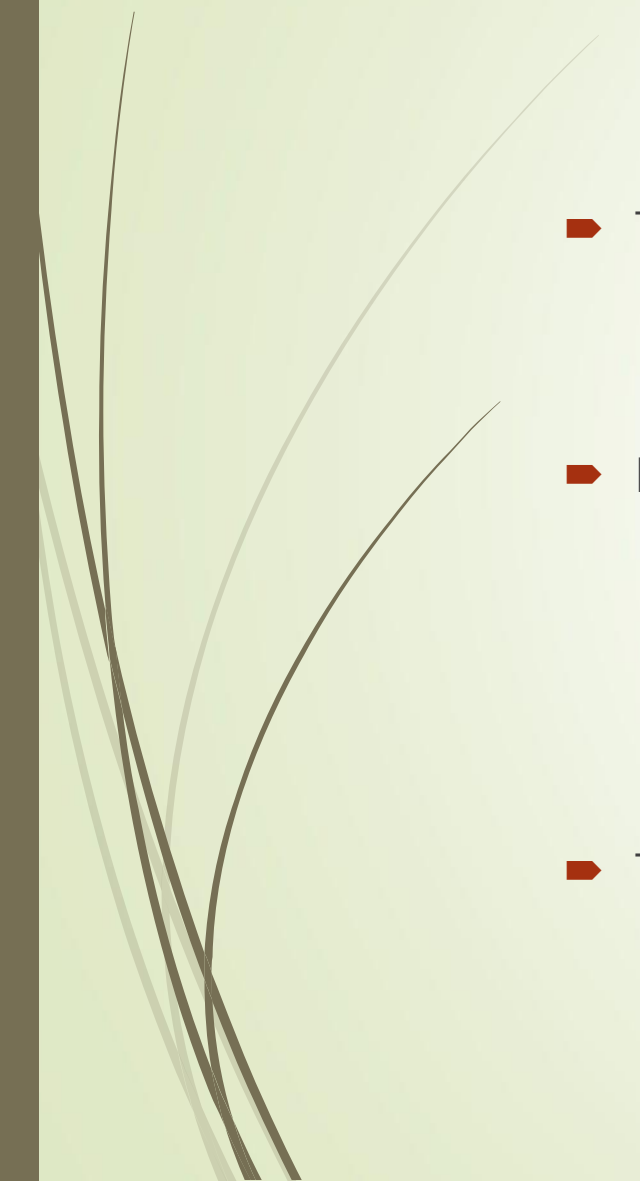


PHEP and Epi Staffing

- Tulare County Health & Human Services Agency (HHSA) houses Public Health department
 - HHSA has 1 full time epidemiologist
 - The PHEP program has 4 total staff
 - 3 full time, 1 part time



Day-to-Day Integration



- ▶ Tulare Epidemiologist partially paid through PHEP grant
 - ▶ Helps ensure program “access” to Epidemiologist
- ▶ Epidemiologist participates in:
 - ▶ Weekly PHEP staff meetings
 - ▶ Local Healthcare Emergency Coalition
 - ▶ Exercises and trainings
- ▶ Tulare Epidemiologist monitors local emergency room data
 - ▶ Epicenter program funded through PHEP grant funds



The CASPER Drought Survey



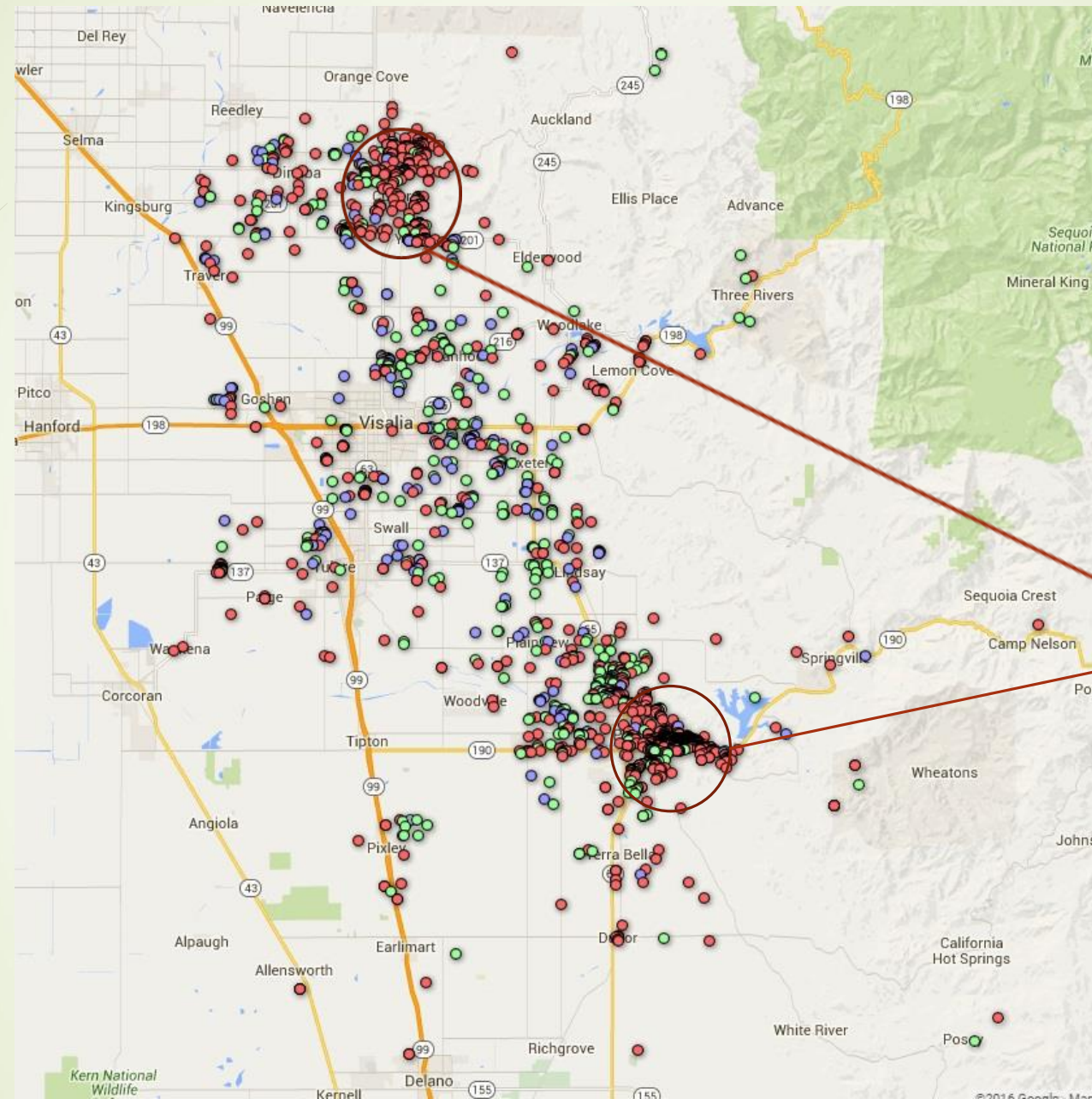
CASPER Survey Tool

- Community Assessment for Public Health Emergency Response
 - CDC-developed survey tool
 - Extrapolate area population data from small surveyed sample



CASPER Survey

- ▶ Tulare County and CDPH conducted 2 simultaneous CASPER surveys
 - ▶ Oct 20-22, 2015 (Tuesday – Thursday)
 - ▶ East Porterville & Cutler-Orosi communities
- ▶ CASPER managed through Incident Command System
 - ▶ Incident Action Plan created
 - ▶ Roles & responsibilities assigned
 - ▶ Emergency Operations Center utilized



Major areas of well failure are
Cutler-Orosi &
East Porterville

Red: Current Outage, Green: Interim Solution, Blue: Resolved



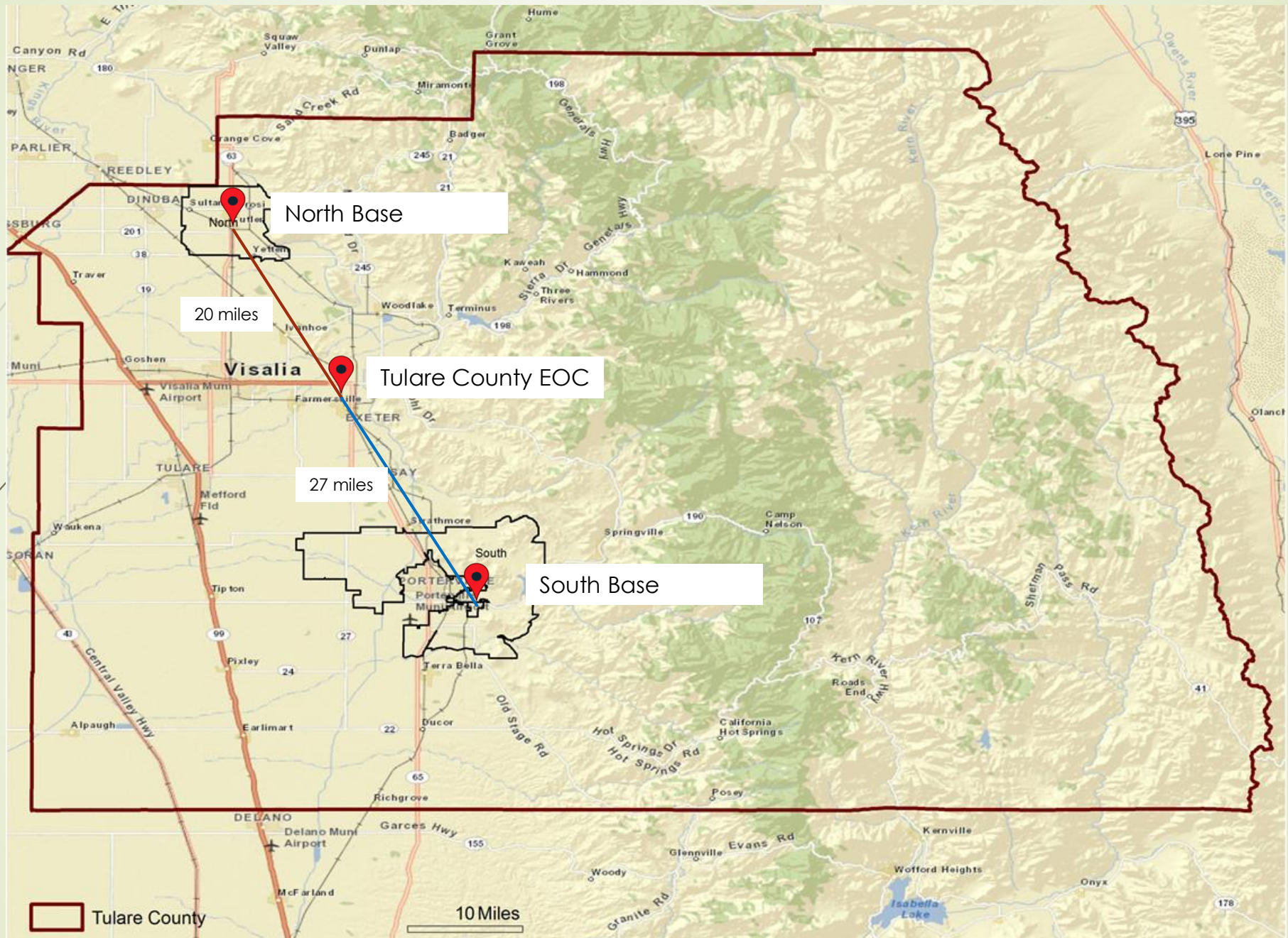
CASPER Conduct – Survey Teams

- Approximately 60 volunteer survey givers in 30 teams
- Survey givers came from:
 - Tulare Health & Human Services Agency
 - California Department of Public Health
 - Community Partners
 - Campesinas Unidas
 - CSET
 - Proteus
 - United Way
- All teams were bilingual in English and Spanish



CASPER Conduct - Logistics

- Central logistics and communications were operated out of Tulare County Emergency Operations Center (EOC)
 - EOC served as site of initial volunteer training
- A fire station in each community was used as a “forward operating base” for each community CASPER
 - Operating bases staffed with CDPH and Tulare County personnel
 - All check-in, check-out, feeding, and rehab after initial training handled at the bases





Integration of Epidemiologists

- Pre-event Planning
 - Identified survey clusters
 - Developed questionnaire
- CASPER Conduct
 - Survey team training
 - Data validation – exit interviews with survey teams at Forward Operating Bases
- Post-CASPER Data Analysis & Report



CASPER-Supported Efforts

- Conduct additional outreach
 - Mental health services information
 - Public health/hygiene messages
 - Exploring television advertising/messaging
- Identify more information to gather
- Pursue funding opportunities



Key Challenges



- Staffing
 - Disaster surge/staffing continuity
 - Limited availability of qualified personnel
- Competing priorities
 - Epi has numerous other duties
 - PHEP program has many areas of focus



Thank You!

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