



GROUNDWATER RESOURCES ASSOCIATION  
OF CALIFORNIA



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*This is a joint release from the USGS and the Groundwater Resources Association of California.*

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More on the conference: <http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/WRC/GW27th.html>

More on the USGS groundwater report: [http://ca.water.usgs.gov/news/ReleaseJuly8\\_2009.html](http://ca.water.usgs.gov/news/ReleaseJuly8_2009.html)

## California groundwater conference to honor USGS report on Central Valley groundwater availability

The Groundwater Resources Association of California next week will present a major award to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) for a report on groundwater availability in California's Central Valley. One local water official called the groundwater model, developed for the study and described in the report, a "gift" from the USGS to the state of California.

The Kevin J. Neese Award, which recognizes the most significant contribution to the "understanding, development, protection and management of groundwater" in California in the last year, will be presented to USGS scientists at the 27<sup>th</sup> Biennial Groundwater Conference and 18<sup>th</sup> GRA Annual Meeting in Sacramento. In addition to GRA, conference sponsors include the University of California Water Resources Center, the California Department of Water Resources, the Water Education Foundation and the USGS. The conference is Tuesday and Wednesday (Oct. 6 and 7) at the Sacramento Convention Center.

The Central Valley Hydrologic Model, developed by scientists at the USGS California Water Science Center, accounts for changing water supply and demand across the landscape, and it simulates surface water and groundwater flow across the entire Central Valley. It was designed to help water agencies assess, understand and address the many issues affecting the joint use of surface water and groundwater in the Central Valley.

Several USGS scientists, and experts and officials from other agencies and organizations, will be speaking at the conference on the issues facing California groundwater, an increasingly important source of water for the state. Among other topics, USGS scientists will discuss results from a statewide assessment of groundwater quality. The complete conference program is available at [http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/WRC/GW27th\\_program.html](http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/WRCA/WRC/GW27th_program.html).

In examining Central Valley groundwater, USGS scientists found that the basin –which contains one-fifth of all the groundwater pumped in the nation – had been depleted by almost 60 million acre-feet of water in the last 50 years. That's enough to supply every resident of the state with water for eight years.

"The state of California received a tremendous 'gift' from the USGS in the form of a report titled, 'Groundwater Availability of the Central Valley Aquifer,'" wrote Roy L. Herndon, Chief Hydrogeologist for the Orange County Water District, in a letter nominating the report for the award.

“The USGS, through its California Water Science Center, is to be credited for developing this valuable report and modeling tool.”

The USGS Groundwater Resources Program launched the research in 2005 to evaluate groundwater conditions in the Central Valley. The study, which cost about \$1 million over four years, is one of 30 regional aquifer studies the USGS is conducting across the country that collectively will lead to an assessment of the Nation’s groundwater availability.

“The Central Valley Hydrologic Model is the first model completed as part of USGS’ National Groundwater Availability Studies,” said Eric Reichard, director of the California Water Science Center. “The model provides a scientific basis to help water managers make informed decisions about different water-supply strategies and address the potential effects of climate change, urban development and different cropping patterns.”

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