



For Immediate Release

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Scientists launching Madera-Chowchilla groundwater study

Public invited to informational meeting March 25

Scientists from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will present their plans Tuesday to study untreated well water from groundwater basins in the areas of Madera and Chowchilla, in California's San Joaquin Valley.

The meeting, conducted by the State Water Resources Control Board and the USGS, is set for Tuesday, March 25th from 1 to 3 p.m. at the Madera City Council Chambers, 205 West Fourth St., Madera, Calif. Maps, an agenda and other information are available at the State Water Board's Web site at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/>. A map of the study unit is below.

The Water Board's Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment (GAMA) Program is collaborating with the USGS and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories (LLNL) to conduct the Priority Basin Assessment Project. The Priority Basin Assessment Project monitors and assesses water quality in groundwater basins in California. The main goals of GAMA are to improve comprehensive statewide groundwater monitoring and to increase the availability of groundwater quality information to the public.

The USGS California Water Science Center is the lead for GAMA's Priority Basin Assessment Project. With the voluntary cooperation of local water agencies and well owners, USGS is testing well water in California groundwater basins over a 10-year period.

Beginning on April 14th, the USGS will sample well water from the Madera and Chowchilla groundwater basins in Madera County and a small portion of Merced and Fresno counties. The Madera/Chowchilla study unit is one of 35 GAMA study units in California. The sampling will be finished by May 23rd, and a report on the data is expected to be available in about a year.

The GAMA Priority Basin Assessment Project is designed to characterize water quality in groundwater basins. GAMA does not evaluate the quality of water delivered to consumers. After withdrawal from the ground, water for public systems is typically treated or mixed to ensure drinking water standards are met before consumers receive it.

More information on the GAMA program is available at: <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/> and <http://ca.water.usgs.gov/gama/>.

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The USGS California Water Science Center (<http://ca.water.usgs.gov/>) operates project offices in Sacramento and San Diego where more than 130 scientists bring a broad range of disciplines to modern water-management issues. The center also has nine field offices where scientists and technicians gather hydrologic data on California's surface-water and ground-water resources.