



For Immediate Release

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USGS scientists to discuss upcoming Borrego, desert groundwater study
Public invited to informational meeting Dec. 3 in Borrego Springs, CA

Scientists with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) will talk next week about a comprehensive study they are launching on water-quality in groundwater basins throughout the Mojave and Sonoran deserts in Southern California.

The meeting, conducted by the State Water Resources Control Board and the USGS, is set for 1 to 3 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3, at the Borrego Water District, 806 Palm Canyon Drive, Borrego Springs, San Diego County, CA. An agenda, maps and other information are available at the State Board's Web site at <http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/>.

The USGS is the lead for the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment Program's Priority Basin Project. The project monitors and assesses water quality in groundwater basins and selected hard-rock aquifers throughout California that are important sources of public water supply. With the voluntary cooperation of local water agencies and well owners, USGS is testing water from approximately 3,000 public-supply wells in California over a 7-year period.

The Borrego/Central Desert/Low Use Desert Basins study areas include parts of San Bernardino, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Diego and Imperial counties.

The main objectives of the GAMA Program are to improve ambient groundwater-quality monitoring and assessment and to increase the availability of groundwater-quality information to the public. The State Water Board is implementing the GAMA Program with the US Geological Survey and Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory.

The GAMA Priority Basin Project tests for hundreds of chemical constituents typically at concentrations well below regulatory levels. GAMA tests untreated well water and 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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<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom>.

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.