



Groundwater is a vital resource, together let's protect it.

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For Immediate Release

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Mid-County Groundwater Agency to Map Seawater Intrusion

Aptos (May 18, 2017) –The Santa Cruz Mid-County Groundwater Agency (MGA) is excited to announce a project to map seawater intrusion in the groundwater aquifers offshore of the Mid-County area, giving residents and local officials a better idea of the threat to local water supplies.

In partnership with SkyTEM and Ramboll, the MGA will be collecting and recording geophysical measurements for scientific research purposes using a low-flying helicopter, using technology originally developed and used in Denmark. The system allows the MGA to collect measurements needed to properly locate the offshore freshwater/saltwater interface, essential information in understanding the immediate risk to coastal wells from seawater contamination.

The survey will require a helicopter to make several passes, in a uniform pattern and at an altitude of hundreds of feet, to measure the electrical properties of the earth. Data collected during this survey will assist scientists in mapping groundwater salinity, and is similar to a recently completed project near Marina.

SkyTEM, a specialty airborne geophysical company, will conduct the geophysical survey. Experienced pilots, who are specially trained for low-level flying required for geophysical surveys, will be operating the helicopter. The company works with the Federal Aviation Administration to ensure flights are in accordance with U.S. law, including restricted areas over the Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Where: Staging will occur at Seascape Park in Aptos, with flights over the Monterey Bay from the Santa Cruz Yacht Harbor to the Seascape area and extending 1 mile off the coast. To collect measurements, the helicopter will tow a large, wire loop. Information about the project will be posted at Seascape Park.

When: May 22, lasting for 1-3 days.

More information about the surveys and a video of the helicopter can be found at <http://skytem.com/>.

More information about the MGA can be found at <http://www.midcountygroundwater.org/>