

## **Frequently Asked Questions related to CASGEM Program**

On or before January 1, 2012, local groundwater Monitoring Entities will regularly and systematically monitor groundwater elevations in California's alluvial basins and subbasins in order to determine seasonal and long-term trends. This information will be made readily and widely available to the public.

### **Monitoring Entity Eligibility and Selection**

Question: What is a groundwater Monitoring Entity?

Answer: A Monitoring Entity is a designated entity that conducts or coordinates the monitoring of groundwater elevations for a basin or subbasin.

Question: Who is eligible to be a Monitoring Entity in the CASGEM program?

Answer: As specified in Water Code Section 10927, any of the following entities are eligible to be a Monitoring Entity and may assume responsibility for monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations in all or a part of a basin or subbasin in the CASGEM program:

1. Section 10927(a): A watermaster or water management engineer appointed by a court or pursuant to statute to administer a final judgment determining rights to groundwater.
2. Section 10927(b)(1): A groundwater management agency with statutory authority to manage groundwater pursuant to its principal act that is monitoring groundwater elevations in all or a part of a groundwater basin or subbasin on or before January 1, 2010.
3. Section 10927(b)(2): A water replenishment district established pursuant to Division 18 (commencing with Section 60000). This part does not expand or otherwise affect the authority of a water replenishment district relating to monitoring groundwater elevations.
4. Section 10927(c): A local agency that is managing all or part of a groundwater basin or subbasin pursuant to Part 2.75 (commencing with Section 10750) and that was monitoring groundwater elevations in all or a part of a groundwater basin or subbasin on or before January 1, 2010, or a local agency or county that is managing all or part of a groundwater basin or subbasin pursuant to any other legally enforceable groundwater management plan with provisions that are substantively similar to those described in that part and that was monitoring groundwater elevations in all or a part of a groundwater basin or subbasin on or before January 1, 2010.
5. Section 10927(d): A local agency that is managing all or part of a groundwater basin or subbasin pursuant to an integrated regional water management plan prepared pursuant to Part 2.2 (commencing with Section 10530) that includes a groundwater management component that complies with the requirements of Section 10753.7.
6. Section 10927(e): A county that is not managing all or a part of a groundwater basin or subbasin pursuant to a legally enforceable groundwater management plan with provisions that are substantively similar to those described in Part 2.75 (commencing with Section 10750).
7. Section 10927(f): A voluntary cooperative groundwater monitoring association formed pursuant to Section 10935.

Question: Are any entities precluded from serving as a Monitoring Entity?

Answer: An entity that is not eligible to assume monitoring and reporting responsibilities in its sole capacity pursuant to Water Code Section 10927 subsections (a) through (e) may form a voluntary cooperative groundwater monitoring association pursuant to Section 10935, as defined in Water Code Section 10927(f).

Question: How do you form a voluntary cooperative groundwater monitoring association to become a Monitoring Entity in the CASGEM program?

Answer: As specified in Water Code Section 10935, a voluntary cooperative groundwater monitoring association may be established by contract, a joint powers agreement, a memorandum of agreement, or other form of agreement deemed acceptable by DWR. The contract or agreement shall include all of the following:

1. The names of the participants.
2. The boundaries of the area covered by the agreement.
3. The name or names of the parties responsible for meeting the requirements of this part.
4. The method of recovering the costs associated with meeting the requirements of this part.
5. Other provisions that may be required by DWR.

In addition, DWR shall work cooperatively with and provide organizational assistance to the interested parties to facilitate the formation of the association [Water Code Section 10933(d)].

Question: If there is no water management agency that qualifies to serve as a Monitoring Entity for a basin, who would have jurisdiction to conduct monitoring the basin for the CASGEM program?

Answer: Each county can qualify to serve as the Monitoring Entity for any basin or subbasin with the county area (Water Code Section 10927 (e)). In addition, local entities that do not qualify as a Monitoring Entity under Water Code Section 10927 (a) through (e) may apply to serve as a Monitoring Entity in the CASGEM program as a Voluntary Cooperative Groundwater Monitoring Association, as defined in Water Code Section 10927(f).

Question: If there are multiple agencies within a basin, how is the Monitoring Entity selected?

Answer: DWR encourages interested parties to work cooperatively at the local level to organize and select the entity or entities for the area. However, if selection cannot be determined at the local level and more than one party seeks to become the Monitoring Entity for the same area, DWR will consult with the interested entities to make this determination, as specified in Water Code Section 10929(c). In making this determination, DWR shall follow the order in which entities are identified in Water Code Section 10927.

Question: What is the best way to identify all agencies/districts within a basin?

Answer: Consult with your county and local water agencies. Your DWR Region Office can also assist you to identify local agencies in your area. Contacts for the DWR Region Office are posted at [http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/groundwater\\_basics/gw\\_contacts\\_info.cfm](http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/groundwater_basics/gw_contacts_info.cfm).

Questions: How do I know if I'm in or out of a basin?

Answer: The CASGEM program applies to the basin and subbasins identified in Bulletin 118 Update 2003, California's Groundwater. Detailed maps and descriptions of the groundwater basin maps can be viewed and shape files can be downloaded from the DWR website: [http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/bulletin118/gwbasin\\_maps\\_descriptions.cfm](http://water.ca.gov/groundwater/bulletin118/gwbasin_maps_descriptions.cfm). Basin and subbasin maps can also be viewed on DWR's Integrated Water Resources Information System (IWRIS) website: <http://www.water.ca.gov/iwris/>, which includes other features such as county lines, shaded relief maps and groundwater management plans.

Question: When will DWR notify the agencies that have submitted Monitoring Entity notifications to DWR that they have been designated the official Monitoring Entities?

Answer: The legislation requires DWR to notify all agencies of the status of their notification within 3 months after the submission to their notification. [Water Code Section 10929 (d)]

**Notification Requirements:**

Question: What information do local agencies have to provide to DWR to become a Monitoring Entity?

Answer: As specified in Water Code Section 10928, prospective Monitoring Entities must notify DWR on or before January 1, 2011. The notifications must include the following information:

Required Information for Monitoring Entity Notification	
Information	Monitoring Entity
Name of Agency, County or Association	All Entities
Agency, County or Association Contact Name	All Entities
Address	All Entities
Telephone Number	All Entities
Email Address and any other relevant contact information	All Entities
Authority (as listed in Water Code Section 10927)	All Entities
Name and number of basin to be monitored (from Bulletin 118)	All Entities
Map and shapefile showing area to be monitored (Note: shapefiles do not need to be submitted by the initial January 1, 2011 notification date; if necessary, DWR Regional Offices can provide assistance to potential Monitoring Entities with shapefiles.)	All Entities
Statement that the entity will comply with the requirements of Water Code Part 2.11	All Entities
Copy of current groundwater management plan	Entities with authority under 10927(c) only
Copy of current groundwater component of integrated regional water management plan	Entities with authority under 10927(d) only
Statement describing the ability or qualifications of the entity to conduct the groundwater monitoring functions required	Entities with authority under 10927(c), (d), (e), and (f) only
Statement of intent to meet the association formation requirements described in Water Code Section 10935	Entities with authority under 10927(f) only
Additional information deemed necessary by DWR to identify monitoring area or qualifications of the Monitoring Entity	All Entities

Note: For a definition of each Monitoring Entity category, refer to the Water Code Section 10927 or FAQ “Who is eligible to be a Monitoring Entity in the CASGEM program?” under **Monitoring Entity Eligibility and Selection**.

**Monitoring Entity Responsibilities:**

Question: Is this a short-term or long-term program?

Answer: This is a long-term program.

Question: Where is groundwater monitoring required?

Answer: Groundwater elevation monitoring is required in all 515 alluvial basins and subbasins identified in DWR Bulletin 118 (2003). Monitoring outside of these basins and subbasins is not required.

Question: Can a Monitoring Entity be responsible for monitoring groundwater elevations in more than one basin or subbasin?

Answer: Yes. A Monitoring Entity may be responsible for more than one basin or subbasin.

Question: Does the Monitoring Entity have to take all of the groundwater elevation measurements?

Answer: No. The Monitoring Entity may compile groundwater elevations measured by other parties monitoring the basin or subbasin.

Question: Which wells in a groundwater basin will be monitored?

Answer: A Monitoring Entity will propose a network of wells sufficient in number to show seasonal and long-term trends in the basin and subbasins.

Question: What will be the frequency for collecting and submitting data to CASGEM?

Answer: The frequency and timing of monitoring will depend on local hydrologic conditions and must be scheduled to obtain the needed information to demonstrate the seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations for the basin. Data should be collected and submitted at least twice a year. As specified in Water Code Section 10932, Monitoring Entities shall begin monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations to DWR on or before January 1, 2012. Thereafter, data should be submitted as soon as possible after collection, but no later than January 1st for fall measurements and July 1st for spring measurements, at the minimum.

Question: How does a Monitoring Entity make changes in its monitoring plan over time?

Answer: There are a number of reasons why a monitoring plan may change over time, including wells going dry or changes in accessibility. When these changes occur, Monitoring Entities should re-evaluate their monitoring plan, notify DWR, and submit a revised monitoring plan to DWR.

Question: Many basins are already being monitored by local agencies; what will change with the implementation of CASGEM?

Answer: Water Code Section 10920 states that it is the intent of the Legislature that groundwater elevations in all groundwater basins and subbasins be regularly and systematically monitored locally and that the resulting groundwater information be made readily and widely available. The statute calls for local agencies to collect and report monitoring data to DWR. In determining what information should be reported to DWR, DWR shall defer to existing monitoring programs if those programs result in information that demonstrates seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations [Water Code Section 10931(a)]. DWR is authorized to make recommendations for improving an existing monitoring program and to require additional wells; however, DWR is prohibited from requiring additional monitoring wells unless funds are provided for that purpose [Water Code Section 10931(b)].

Question: Is it mandatory that all well owners participate?

Answer: No. Individual participation is voluntary in coordination with an approved Monitoring Entity.

Question: Can anyone monitor my well without my permission?

Answer: No. Permission must be granted by the property owner.

Question: Who is responsible for protecting the water quality of the monitoring wells in the CASGEM program?

Answer: Each Monitoring Entity is responsible for establishing monitoring protocols for themselves and any Cooperating Agencies who assist them in well monitoring to protect the water quality of the wells in the CASGEM program.

Question: Will private well data, such as owner's name and well location, be posted on line?

Answer: Information regarding the well owner's name and the street address for wells should not be submitted to CASGEM. For identification in the CASGEM system, a station identifier and the latitude/longitude coordinates for each well will be posted online. Actual coordinates are preferred; however, Monitoring Entities may submit approximate locations, as needed, to protect the privacy of well owners. For example, to protect the privacy of a well owner, a Monitoring Entity may submit well coordinate locations that are only within 1000-feet of the actual well location. In all cases, the method of determining coordinates should be noted with the data submittal.

Question: Why are Monitoring Entities required to submit numerical well coordinates rather than using Township, Range and Section coordinates?

Answer: To provide GIS-formatted data to the public, the data base must use a common coordinate system. Decimal latitude/longitude coordinates, using horizontal datum NAD83, will be used for the CASGEM data base, which will enable CASGEM to provide GIS-formatted data to the public.

Question: How exact do well locations, reference point elevation and depth to water measurements need to be?

Answer: The CASGEM program recognizes that data availability, costs, and privacy issues will affect the accuracy and precision of coordinate and elevation data. For example, Monitoring Entities may use topographic maps, a global positioning system (GPS), digital elevation model (DEM), or surveying to determine land surface elevations. In all cases, measurements should be as accurate and precise as is feasible and practical, and the method of determining coordinates and elevations should be provided with each submittal.

Question: Will well construction log information be posted on line?

Answer: If available, well completion report number, the screened interval(s) and total depth of the well should be submitted to DWR's online CASGEM system and will be posted.

Question: What monitoring information do Monitoring Entities report to DWR?

Answer: DWR requests that each Monitoring Entity submit the following well and groundwater elevation information to DWR's online CASGEM system, which is currently under development. Information submitted to the CASGEM program will be publically available.

### **Well Information**

The following information about each well is required for the CASGEM online system:

- Unique well identification number. Agencies may use an existing State Well Number, an existing local well designation, or develop their own identification name, using the following protocol:
  - Agency name, abbreviation, or acronym followed by a sequential number (e.g., SGA 01)
  - Groundwater basin – followed by a sequential number (e.g., Llagas 03)
  - Geographic name – followed by a sequential number (e.g., Yolo 12)
  - Well names should be 15 characters long or less
  - Avoid using owner/business names or specific locational information for privacy and security
- Decimal latitude/longitude coordinates of well, using horizontal datum NAD83, and the method of determining coordinates. (Actual coordinates are preferred; however, Monitoring Entities may submit approximate locations, as needed, to protect the privacy of well owners.)
- Groundwater basin or sub-basin
- Reference point elevation of the well (feet) using NAVD88 vertical datum
- Elevation of land surface datum at the well (feet) using NAVD88 vertical datum
- Use of well (e.g., dedicated monitoring, irrigation, domestic, etc)
- Well completion type (e.g. single well, nested, or multi-completion wells)
- Depth of screened interval(s) and total well depth of well, if available (feet)
- Well Completion Report number (DWR Form 188), if available

The following information about each well is recommended for the CASGEM online system:

- State Well Number – assigned by DWR in most cases
- Method by which land surface elevation was determined (for example, topographic map, GPS, etc.)
- Written description of location of well, including distance from nearby landmarks and location of reference point in relation to well appurtenances (DWR Form 429)
- Well information comments

### **Groundwater Elevation Information**

The following information for each groundwater elevation measurement is required for the CASGEM online system:

- Well identification number (see Well Information, above)
- Measurement date
- Reference point elevation of the well (feet) using NAVD88 vertical datum
- Elevation of land surface datum at the well (feet) using NAVD88 vertical datum
- Depth to water below reference point (feet) (unless no measurement was taken)
- Method of measuring water depth
- Measurement Quality Codes
  - If no measurement is taken, a specified “no measurement” code, must be recorded. Standard codes will be provided by the online system. If a measurement is taken, a “no measurement” code is not recorded.)
  - If the quality of a measurement is uncertain, a “questionable measurement” code can be recorded. Standard codes will be provided by the online system. If no measurement is taken, a “questionable measurement” code is not recorded.)
- Measuring agency identification

The following information for each groundwater elevation measurement is recommended for the CASGEM online system:

- Measurement time military time

- Comments about measurement, if applicable

Question: Who is responsible for ensuring the data quality of the groundwater elevation data submitted to the CASGEM program?

Answer: Four classifications of Monitoring Entities (defined in the Water Code in Section 10927 c, d, e and f) must submit a statement to DWR that describes their ability or qualifications to conduct the groundwater monitoring functions required by the CASGEM program. However, each Monitoring Entity is responsible for establishing and maintaining monitoring protocols for themselves and any Cooperating Agencies who assist them in well monitoring to ensure the quality of the groundwater elevation measurement that the Monitoring Entity submits to the CASGEM program.

Question: Can Monitoring Agencies use the State Well Number (SWN) that has been assigned to a well to identify its wells in the CASGEM system?

Answer: Yes, Monitoring Entities are required to provide a unique well identification number for each well in their CASGEM monitoring plan. The well identification number can be an existing State Well Number, an existing local well designation, or Monitoring Entities may develop their own identification name.

Question: When will Monitoring Entities submit monitoring data to CASGEM?

Answer: Data should be collected and submitted at least twice a year. As specified in Water Code Section 10932, Monitoring Entities shall begin monitoring and reporting groundwater elevations to DWR on or before January 1, 2012. Thereafter, data should be submitted as soon as possible after collection, but no later than January 1st for fall measurements and July 1st for spring measurements, at the minimum.

Question: What format will Monitoring Entities use to submit the data?

Answer: DWR is developing an online data submittal system for Monitoring Entities. Several methods of submitting data will be available, such as direct online data entry or upload of data files for batch entry. DWR will develop electronic data transmittal (EDT) alternatives and data standards to permit bulk data transfer and assist Monitoring Entities to plan data handling to accommodate reporting to DWR. If Monitoring Entities cannot use the standard form(s) or provide the necessary groundwater elevation data elements, DWR will work cooperatively with Monitoring Entities to develop alternate methods of submitting data. More information will be available with the development of the system. Agencies interested in providing input to DWR on the development of EDT alternatives should contact their Region Office.

Question: Will data submitted to CASGEM be protected from hackers?

Answer: DWR will employ a secure data transfer protocol and industry-standard methods to protect transmittal of data, the security of the CASGEM data center, and the integrity of the data.

#### **DWR Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Guidelines:**

Question: Will DWR provide guidelines for developing monitoring plans and protocols for monitoring?

Answer: The Water Code specifies the end product, but not monitoring methodologies, for the CASGEM program. In determining what information should be reported to DWR, DWR shall defer to existing monitoring programs if those programs result in information that

demonstrates seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations [Water Code Section 10931(a)].

In an effort to help local entities decide whether they want to volunteer to monitor groundwater elevations, DWR has developed two documents that are be posted on the CASGEM website.

The first document, Procedures for Monitoring Entity Reporting for the California Statewide Groundwater Elevation Monitoring (CASGEM) Program, summarizes the requirements of the law, explains how Monitoring Entities are established, and describes how data will be submitted on-line to DWR.

The second document, DWR Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Guidelines, describes the groundwater monitoring procedures that DWR will use if no local entity volunteers to perform CASGEM monitoring and DWR is required to conduct monitoring. These Guidelines are not binding on local entities monitoring a basin, but can provide guidance to local entities considering whether they wish to assume groundwater monitoring functions and may be helpful to determine what to include in the monitoring plans required by the law. Each basin is unique, and DWR will work with the designated Monitoring Entities to determine the appropriate plan for each basin.

Agencies are encouraged to contact DWR Region Office staff if you have any questions or need help in developing a monitoring plan under CASGEM.

Question: When will guidelines be made available?

Answer: DWR posted the Draft CASGEM Procedures for Monitoring Entity Reporting and the Draft Groundwater Elevation Monitoring Guidelines on the CASGEM website in early November 2010. The public comment period for these draft documents ended on November 22, 2010. DWR posted the final documents in mid December 2010.

### **Public Supply Wells:**

Question: Why does the CASGEM program exclude public water supply wells?

Answer: The Water Code Section 10931 requires DWR to collaborate with the California Department of Public Health (DPH) to ensure that the information reported to DWR will not result in the inappropriate disclosure of the physical address or geographical location of drinking water sources, storage facilities, pumping operational data, or treatment facilities. Because groundwater information resulting from the CASGEM program, including well locations, will be made readily and widely available, public water supply wells will be excluded from the program until DWR and DPH come to agreement on release of this information.

Question: What is the definition of a public water supply well?

Answer: In collaborating with DWR to ensure that information would not result in inappropriate disclosures, DPH and DWR would refer to the definitions of "Public water system" contained in Health & Safety Code § 116275(h) and Water Code Section 10912(c).

Question: Can private domestic wells be used as monitoring wells in the CASGEM program?

Answer: Yes, the Monitoring Entity is responsible for informing the well owner that the groundwater elevation and related information will be available to the public on the CASGEM website.



Question: If only public water supply wells are developed and no private wells exist in a groundwater basin, is a Monitoring Entity needed?

Answer: Yes, a Monitoring Entity is still required for a basin that only contains public water supply wells. A Monitoring Entity still needs to be established and to communicate with the DWR Region Office so that efforts to close the data gap can be taken. Currently, public water supply wells are excluded from the CASGEM program. However, the recently enacted Water Code includes monitoring for all 515 groundwater basins and subbasins identified in Bulletin 118. If the jurisdiction of a Monitoring Entity includes an area that contains only public wells, the Monitoring Entity should contact the DWR Region Office to determine if there are any other wells in the area. Additionally, this area should be identified as a data gap. Data gaps can be described in the Monitoring Plan and locations for potential future construction of monitoring wells can also be identified.

### **Data Gaps:**

Question: There are basins outside of the jurisdiction of water agencies, where no monitoring is currently provided; are these areas included in the CASGEM program?

Answer: Yes, all 515 alluvial groundwater basins and subbasins identified in Bulletin 118 are included in the CASGEM program. Although basins or portions thereof may be outside the jurisdiction of all the local water agencies, counties are also authorized to become Monitoring Entities in the CASGEM program. In addition, CASGEM permits the formation of voluntary cooperative groundwater monitoring associations to act as Monitoring Entities (Water Code Section 10935).

Question: Can a Monitoring Entity submit data collected by an entity in a bordering state if a basin is located in California and another state?

Answer: Yes.

Question: How would a Monitoring Entity deal with a basin that contains undeveloped land with no wells, either because the aquifers contain poor quality groundwater or are located in a remote part of the state?

Answer: The California Water Code requires that every groundwater basin be monitored. If DWR performs groundwater monitoring functions in lieu of local entities, those entities may become ineligible for water grants or loans awarded or administered by the state as specified in Water Code Section 10933.7. However, DWR recognizes that there are basins defined by Bulletin 118-2003 that are located in remote areas, have little to no current groundwater production, may have restrictions on future construction of monitoring wells, or are otherwise outside of the ability for a County or other agency to monitor effectively. DWR is not authorized under current law to waive the requirement to monitor any groundwater basin or subbasin but is authorized to prioritize groundwater basins and subbasins. Monitoring Entities can describe circumstances for data gaps in the Monitoring Plan and identify locations for potential future construction of monitoring wells.

Question: How would a Monitoring Entity deal with private property owners and some State and Federal lands that do not allow access for groundwater monitoring?

Answer: The legislation that created the CASGEM Groundwater Monitoring Program does not alter existing property rights or expand government powers with regard to those rights. If private or government owners are not willing to allow groundwater monitoring on their property, the Monitoring Plan should describe how this lack of data affects the ability to monitor

groundwater elevations for the basin or subbasin and the efforts made to obtain access. The locations of any potential future construction of monitoring wells can also be identified.

**Question:** Can Monitoring Entities use production wells for groundwater elevation monitoring, rather than dedicated monitoring wells? What if only production wells are available?

**Answer:** Dedicated monitoring wells usually provide the most consistently reliable, accurate groundwater elevation data. However, monitoring wells often do not exist or are not available (e.g. access restrictions, monitoring well gone dry, etc.) Although production wells are not ideal, they can and should be used if monitoring wells are not available, with the exception of public water supply wells. (See FAQ on Public Water Supply wells.) As described in Water Code Section 10931, DWR shall work cooperatively with each Monitoring Entity to determine the manner in which groundwater elevation information should be reported to DWR for the CASGEM program. In determining what information should be reported to DWR, DWR shall defer to existing monitoring programs if those programs result in information that demonstrates seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations. The monitoring plan should include the rationale for including production wells in the monitoring program.

#### **Existing DWR Monitoring Programs:**

**Question:** If a basin uses DWR monitoring data for the CASGEM program, how does the Monitoring Entity coordinate with DWR to submit these data and who will have future responsibility to monitor these wells?

**Answer:** The Monitoring Entity should contact their local DWR Region Office to determine which DWR wells to include in their monitoring plan. DWR will transmit groundwater monitoring data from the DWR wells selected by the Monitoring Entity to the CASGEM program. As stated in Water Code Section 10920(b), it is the intent of the Legislature that the DWR continue to maintain its current network of monitoring wells, including groundwater elevation and groundwater quality monitoring wells and that DWR continues to coordinate monitoring with local entities. Funding for wells that DWR currently monitors comes from other funding sources, not the CASGEM program. Monitoring Entities will be required to re-evaluate their monitoring network if DWR is unable to continue monitoring for any reason.

#### **Use of Data/Interpretation of Data:**

**Question:** What are the data going to be used for?

**Answer:** The data will be compiled in a statewide database that is available to the public. The data can be used by local and state entities to evaluate and monitor groundwater conditions in the basins.

**Question:** How will DWR use the data to perform assessments of groundwater basins?

**Answer:** The Water Code (Section 12924) requires DWR, in conjunction with other public agencies, to conduct an investigation of the state's groundwater basins and to report its findings to the Governor and the Legislature not later than January 1, 2012, and thereafter every 5 years in years ending in 5 or 0. The statute specifies that DWR shall (1) identify the state's groundwater basins on the basis of geological and hydrological conditions and consideration of political boundary lines whenever practical and (2) investigate existing general patterns of groundwater pumping and groundwater recharge within those basins to the extent necessary to identify basins that are subject to critical conditions of overdraft. The data collected in the CASGEM program will contribute to this investigation. DWR will

work with local agencies that manage the groundwater basins to conduct the basin assessments, provided funding is available to do so.

### **DWR's Role and Responsibilities:**

Question: What is DWR's role in the selection of Monitoring Entities?

Answer: DWR's role is to review Monitoring Entity notifications, to assist interested parties with the notification process, and to announce Monitoring Entities designations. The Water Code (Section 10929) directs DWR to review all Monitoring Entity notifications for completeness and accuracy and to assess the qualifications of local agencies, counties and volunteer associations [parties with authority under Water Code Section 10927(c), (d), (e), and (f)]. DWR will contact prospective Monitoring Entities to resolve any deficiencies in their notification. If DWR is unable to resolve the deficiencies, DWR shall notify the party in writing that the notification will not be considered further until the deficiencies are corrected.

If DWR determines that more than one party seeks to become the Monitoring Entity for the same portion of a basin or subbasin, DWR shall consult with the interested parties to determine which party will perform the monitoring functions. In determining which party will perform the monitoring functions, DWR shall follow the order in which entities are identified in Water Code Section 10927. Upon completion of each notification review, DWR shall notify each submitting party in writing. DWR shall post each Monitoring Entity determination and the specific portion of the basin or subbasin for which it shall assume groundwater monitoring functions on the CASGEM web site (Water Code Section 10930). DWR will provide the status of the notification within three months of receipt [Water Code Section 10929(d)].

Question: What will happen if a basin is not monitored by a local entity?

Answer: After receipt of notification from Monitoring Entities and receipt of monitoring plans, DWR will assess the extent of groundwater elevation monitoring that is being undertaken within each basin and subbasin in the CASGEM program (Water Code Section 10933). If DWR determines that all or part of a basin or subbasin is not being monitored, DWR would be required to perform groundwater monitoring functions. However, before assuming groundwater monitoring functions, DWR must perform the following tasks:

- Attempt to contact all well owners within the area not being monitored
- Determine if there is an interest in establishing a GWMP, IRWM plan or a voluntary groundwater monitoring association

If DWR determines that there is sufficient interest in establishing a GWMP, IRWM plan or a voluntary groundwater monitoring association, DWR shall provide organizational assistance for up to two years to the party seeking to qualify as a CASGEM Monitoring Entity [Water Code Section 10933(d)]. If DWR determines that there is insufficient local interest in performing monitoring and reporting for the CASGEM program, DWR shall:

- Identify any existing monitoring wells owned or operated by any state or federal agency
- Determine whether existing state or federal wells provide sufficient data for CASGEM program

Finally, if DWR determines that there is insufficient information from state or federal wells, with concurrence from the State Mining and Geology Board, DWR shall perform groundwater monitoring functions for the CASGEM program, provided resources are available to conduct monitoring.

Question: If DWR determines that a Monitoring Entity's network is inadequate, does DWR have the authority to assume monitoring function?

Answer: In determining what information should be reported to CASGEM, DWR will defer to existing monitoring programs if those programs result in information that demonstrates seasonal and long-term trends in groundwater elevations. In evaluating a Monitoring Entity's network, DWR may recommend improvements to an existing monitoring program, including recommendations for additional monitoring wells. (Water Code Section 10931) It is the intention of the legislation to encourage and support groundwater elevation monitoring by local entities, and accordingly, DWR will work cooperatively with each Monitoring Entity to achieve this goal. However, if DWR determines that monitoring in all or part of a basin or subbasin fails to demonstrate seasonal and long-term trends, the Water Code directs DWR to implement an evaluation process (see previous FAQ) to determine if DWR is required to perform groundwater monitoring functions (Water Code Section 10933).

### **Compliance/Funding Eligibility/Deadlines:**

Question: Who will be affected if a basin is not monitored by a local entity?

Answer: If DWR assumes groundwater monitoring functions for the CASGEM program, DWR shall notify each well owner and county within affected area. DWR shall not assess a fee or charge to recover the costs for carrying out its power and duties under this part. However, the county and the local agencies with the authority to assume monitoring and reporting responsibilities pursuant to Water Code Section 10927 may be ineligible for a water grant or loan awarded or administered by the state. The specific eligibility requirements will be determined by the grant programs, not the CASGEM program.

Question: The Water Code associated with the CASGEM program states that agencies and counties that are eligible to be designated Monitoring Entities but choose not participate in the CASGEM program will not lose their state water grant and loan eligibility if their entire service area qualifies as a disadvantaged community. How does an agency or county qualify for this exception to the CASGEM program?

Answer: The CASGEM program does not award or administer water grants or loans, and thus has no role in determining whether any entity is eligible for such grants or loans pursuant to the exception for disadvantaged communities described in Water Code Section 10933.7(b). It will be the responsibility of the local agency or county applying for a state water grant or loan to demonstrate their disadvantaged community status at the time they are applying for the grant or loan.

Question: Could DWR delay the notification deadlines for Monitoring Entities? Some counties will need the support of Cooperating Agencies to perform groundwater monitoring; however, there is insufficient time to meeting the January 1, 2011 notification deadline.

Answer: CASGEM deadlines are stipulated in the Water Code. DWR is not authorized to change these deadlines, but is dedicated to working with Monitoring Entities to implement the CASGEM program.

### **Scope and Purpose of CASGEM Program:**

Question: Does the CASGEM program demand reporting of groundwater withdrawals and consider issues of contamination and beneficial use?

Answer: The CASGEM program does not address groundwater use, reporting of pumping withdrawal, contamination, or judgments of beneficial use.

Question: Why doesn't CASGEM focus on basins in the state that are not currently being monitored, not those that are adequately monitored?

Answer: The goal of CASGEM is to initiate a program of Statewide groundwater elevation monitoring and reporting for all groundwater basins and subbasins and to make this information publically available.

Question: Can DWR modify the definition of a "basin" or "subbasin" to include potential surrounding highlands or recharge areas?

Answer: Water Code Section 10925 defines "basin" and "subbasin" to mean a groundwater basin or subbasin as identified and defined in DWR's Bulletin No. 118, including future revisions. Any change to the definition of groundwater basin or subbasin in future updates to Bulletin 118 would affect the definition of those terms as used by the CASGEM program. However, the Water Code does not preclude or discourage groundwater elevation monitoring in any area outside the defined basins. Furthermore, monitoring and reporting groundwater levels outside defined groundwater basins can be submitted to DWR's Water Data Library.