



MARINA COAST WATER DISTRICT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Groundwater mapping helicopter to make low-level flights over Northern Salinas Valley

Beginning April 23, 2019, residents of Marina, Seaside, Del Rey Oaks, Neponset, Castroville, Moss Landing, Blanco, and Salinas, may see a low-flying helicopter towing a large hexagonal frame. This unique equipment is part of a project to further map groundwater aquifers and subsurface geology in the area.

The Marina Coast Water District, working with Aqua Geo Frameworks, have planned the flight to improve our understanding of the area's groundwater resources. Groundwater is an important source of water in the Salinas Valley Basin and improving our knowledge of the aquifers will help local agencies determine how best to protect our existing groundwater supplies as well as better assess the impacts of new wells and recharge projects on our aquifer. MCWD collected data in a smaller area by helicopter at the end of the drought in May 2017. This new data will help us understand how the groundwater basin has changed following two years of normal rainfall.

Scientific equipment hangs about 100 feet below the helicopter and is designed to map geologic structures and groundwater resources down to approximately 900 feet below the land surface. The helicopter will be flown by pilots who are specially trained for low-level flying and their flight path is designed to get the best available underground data. To ensure the highest quality information, data will only be collected over open spaces and no data collection will occur over residential areas or other buildings. After the flights, Aqua Geo Frameworks will use the data to produce a final report that MCWD will use to make management decisions on how to sustainably manage our groundwater.

MCWD provides high quality water, waste water and recycled water services to more than 30,000 customers in the Monterey Peninsula communities of the City of Marina and the Ord Community through management, conservation, and development of future sources while at reasonable costs. The District is governed by a five-member board of directors who are elected by voters.

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Editor: In the public interest and in accordance with Federal Aviation Administration regulations, Marina Coast Water District is announcing this low-level airborne project. Your assistance in publicizing this information is appreciated.