

SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT

IN THE TRACY SUBBASIN

March 2022

Airborne Electromagnetic Surveys are Coming to the San Joaquin Valley

The California Department of Water Resources (DWR) has begun conducting Airborne Electromagnetic (AEM) surveys across the State of California, and the San Joaquin Valley is scheduled to be the next region for surveying.

AEM surveys are used to gather specific data through the use of special electronic equipment that sends signals into the ground as it's carried by a helicopter. The surveys provide valuable information to help water managers gain a better understanding of the state's groundwater aquifer structure to support drought response and to assist in implementation of the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA).

From approximately April 3 through April 25, helicopter AEM surveying will be taking place in San Joaquin County. You may notice the aircraft flying 200 feet above the ground, carrying a giant hoop about 100 feet above ground.

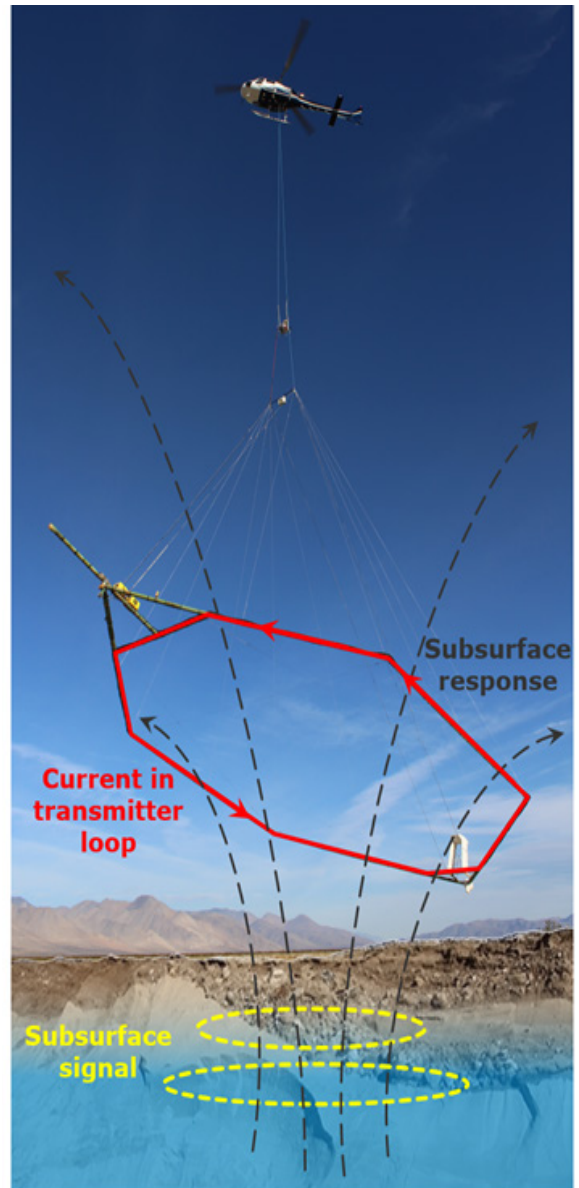


Source: DWR



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The surveys are safe, not disruptive to the land, and are conducted by experienced pilots. The surveys will only be conducted during the day and the helicopters will not be flown over businesses, homes, or other structures with people or livestock inside. This type of survey has already been safely conducted in other high- and medium-priority basins. The hoop measures electric conductivity and magnetic resistance to about 1,000 feet below the surface and creates a two-dimensional picture of sand, silt, clay, and rock in the groundwater aquifer. Data from this effort is anticipated to be available to the Groundwater Sustainability Agencies and the public in the first quarter of 2023.



Source: DWR

For more detailed information please watch DWR's [short 2-minute video](#) on the introduction to the AEM method—provided in both English and [Spanish](#)—and visit DWR's AEM web page located [here](#).

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