

Cold Spring Groundwater Study: Stakeholder Fact Sheet #2

At the quarterly stakeholder meeting on June 6, 2017, stakeholders voiced concern about the study area for the Cold Spring Groundwater Study. DNR prepared this fact sheet to address stakeholder concerns and answer questions about the study area. We have also identified a Technical Advisory Group to oversee the technical aspects of the project.

How did DNR choose the size of the study area?

The Cold Spring Groundwater Study is focused on the area around Cold Spring Creek. This “Area of Interest” is outlined in yellow on the attached map. Groundwater flows into the Area of Interest from outside the yellow box. Therefore groundwater pumping and recharge outside the Area of Interest affects groundwater levels within the Area of Interest. Put another way: if we don’t understand how groundwater flows outside of and into the yellow box, we won’t understand groundwater flow inside the yellow box.

We are collecting field data in the “Data Collection Area”, outlined in purple on the attached map. We selected the Data Collection Area so that it covers the entire area where groundwater pumping and surface water management could affect groundwater and surface water inside the Area of Interest. The Data Collection Area also includes places where groundwater activities likely wouldn’t affect the Area of Interest, but we are collecting data there anyway to make sure we understand the groundwater system correctly.

Why is DNR collecting data south of the Sauk River?

The USGS groundwater study of the Cold Spring Area in 2001 showed that pumping from the Gold’n Plump wells, which are south of the Sauk River, drew in groundwater from north of the Sauk River. This shows that groundwater pumping on one side of the river affects groundwater on the other side of the river. However, we don’t know how far away from the river a well must be to avoid affecting the other side. The Data Collection Area extends across the river because we know that pumping on the south side of the river affects what happens on the north side.

Why is DNR collecting data at School Lake and Little Watab Lake?

The USGS built a groundwater flow model of the Cold Spring Area in 2001. A shortcoming of that model was that the model’s northern boundary was too close to the City of Cold Spring’s wellfields. To ensure that the boundaries of DNR’s model are positioned correctly, we are collecting data at School Lake and Little Watab Lake along the northern edge of the Data Collection Area.

If you have questions please visit the project website at: www.dnr.state.mn.us/gwmp/cold-spring/index.html

