

Cold Spring Groundwater Study: Fact Sheet 1

Project Overview

Why is the DNR studying Cold Spring Creek?

Groundwater use in and around Cold Spring, Minnesota reduces groundwater flow into Cold Spring Creek. Multiple studies conducted by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Minnesota Department of Health, and United States Geological Survey have shown that groundwater use impacts Cold Spring Creek.

The groundwater system, which is strongly connected to Cold Spring Creek, supplies the City of Cold Spring, Cold Spring Brewing Company (CSBC), and numerous private and irrigation wells. Cold Spring Creek is a designated trout stream protected by Minnesota Statute 103G.285. According to the Statute, water cannot be appropriated from designated trout streams on an ongoing basis. Groundwater use continues to grow in the Cold Spring area, which could increase impacts to Cold Spring Creek.

The 2016 Minnesota State Legislature directed the DNR to “conduct necessary monitoring of stream flow and water levels and develop a groundwater model to determine the amount of water that can be sustainably pumped in the area of Cold Spring Creek for area businesses, agriculture, and city needs.”

What is the goal of this project?

The DNR will conduct monitoring and build a groundwater model that will help us determine how groundwater can be pumped in the Cold Spring area without negatively impacting Cold Spring Creek. The *Report to the Minnesota State Legislature: definitions and thresholds for negative impacts to surface waters* defines negative impacts to surface waters, including trout streams. We will use the thresholds defined in that report to define how much impact to the creek is acceptable.

The DNR will strive to ensure that groundwater use in the City of Cold Spring can be sustainable with little impacts to Cold Spring Creek and private well owners.

When will the project be complete?

DNR started collecting field data for this study during summer 2017. We have also started work on the groundwater model. The entire project will be completed in December 2021.