Dear NAWQA Liaison Participants,

Please join us for a meeting to learn more about and provide input on the USGS National Water-Quality Assessment (NAWQA) program goals and future directions for groundwater studies and products over the next decade.

What: NAWQA Liaison Meeting—Plans for Assessing the Quality of Our Nation's Groundwater—An Invisible and Vital Resource

When: 10 am till noon on May 8, 2015
Where: Washington Court Hotel, 525 New Jersey Ave. N.W., Washington, D.C.

Every day, millions of gallons of groundwater are pumped to supply drinking water for about 142 million people. Understanding how our use of groundwater and the application of chemicals can alter the quality of this valuable resource can help develop groundwater protection strategies. Over the last two decades, about 6,600 wells were sampled by the NAWQA program to document where contaminants occur, whether they come from natural or human sources, and to develop an understanding of the natural and human factors that affect the occurrence of contaminants in the Nation's groundwater (See Circular 1360).

Over the next decade, NAWQA plans to focus on the following questions:

What is the quality of water in deep aquifers that supply over two-thirds of the population that relies on groundwater for drinking water?

How long does it take water and contaminants in shallow parts of the Nation's principal aquifers to reach drinking-water sources?

Could contaminant concentrations in such sources reach levels that might challenge communities in different regions of the country?

At the May 8 Liaison meeting you will learn more about planned monitoring and modeling studies designed to answer these questions and have an opportunity to provide feedback on these activities:

Monitoring the Quality of Deep Groundwater—during the first two decades, NAWQA monitoring focused on the shallow part of the groundwater system. Over the next decade, about 1,500 deep public supply wells will be sampled and analyzed for a large number of regulated and unregulated contaminants, selected emerging contaminants, geochemical indicators, and tracers of groundwater age. You will hear about how we can use these data to provide a three-dimensional picture of groundwater quality in selected principal aquifers across the country.

Predictive Maps of Contaminants—By combining two decades of data with an understanding of what factors affect groundwater quality we can create large-scale statistical models that predict where a contaminant is likely to occur and at what concentration. See examples and learn more about the development of these predictive maps for a range of contaminants.

Will Changing Groundwater Quality Affect Water Supplies in the Future—Over the next decade, we will be resampling over 2,000 wells to get a better picture of where and how quickly groundwater is changing, and more importantly, how natural factors and human actions are influencing observed trends. Combined with age-dating results and groundwater flow models we can assess how quickly contaminants move from recharge areas to wells or streams and if they are likely to reach levels that threaten drinking-water supplies or aquatic ecosystems.

Please RSVP to Carise Barbour (cbarbour@usgs.gov) or by clicking the link below, by **April 30, 2015**.

We look forward to seeing you next month.

Bill Wilber, Chief

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