



State of Wisconsin
Governor Tony Evers

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection
Secretary Randy Romanski

Date: February 11, 2022
To: **Impacted Stakeholders**
From: The Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP)
Subject: Low-flying Helicopter to Survey Shallow Bedrock in Southwest and Southeast Wisconsin

A collaborative project has been developed between the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Wisconsin Geological and Natural History Survey (WGNHS), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and the Wisconsin Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection (DATCP) to utilize the emerging technology of airborne electromagnetic (AEM) surveys in southeastern and southwestern Wisconsin. The use of AEM for this type of evaluation is new but has been used historically in the energy and mineral sector for rapid and large area coverage. Project partners are coordinating this effort to better understand how surface water and groundwater are connected, and the geometry of different aquifer units. Using AEM allows scientists to develop a 3D image of the subsurface geology to better predict how water moves through those layers and how groundwater and surface water are connected.

Flights are expected to start in southwestern Wisconsin on or about February 20 and continue in southeastern Wisconsin in early March 2022; exact dates will be weather dependent. At this time, surveying will take place in the following counties: Grant, Iowa, Lafayette, Green, Waukesha, Walworth, Racine, and Kenosha. This study, which involves the use of a helicopter towing a large hoop hanging from a cable, will be highly visible given the low flying aircraft.

This survey supports public health efforts to protect groundwater and promote water quality. The results will:

1. Create a better understanding of aquifer properties.
2. Address groundwater quality.
3. Improve understanding of the influence of surface activities (e.g., agriculture, mining, development) on groundwater quality.

This project uses the strength of local, state, and federal resources to help citizens in southern Wisconsin. We are providing this information to assist in responding to calls from the public about our activities. Additionally, a formal press release to the general public and media is forthcoming.

Contact information for each agency with their respective project responsibilities is outlined on the following webpage: [Airborne Electromagnetic \(AEM\) Survey 2022 | U.S. Geological Survey \(usgs.gov\)](#). Please refer people to this link, and have them call or email with any questions.

Please feel free to share this information with other officials and the public.

Thank you,

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