

News

SCIENTISTS FIND ANCIENT WATER IN THE SIERRA

By *The Record*
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SONORA - If you sip water from a well in the Sierra Nevada, it may mean you are quenching your thirst with molecules that last saw daylight before the pharaohs ordered the pyramids built.

Scientists working for the U.S. Geological Survey call that "old" water to distinguish it from "new" water that turns up in wells only a year or two after falling as rain or snow. And on Thursday, they will be talking about that old water as well as other findings from a recent study of the quality of water taken from wells in the Sierra Nevada, including in Calaveras County.

"For the most part, the water we saw had very little evidence of contamination from human activities," said Miranda Fram, a research chemist with USGS.

Some of that water is from the last ice age, Fram said. Some wells have a mixture of "old" water and water recharged by recent rain and snow.

Fram and other USGS staff will host a meeting on their findings from 1 to 3 p.m. Thursday at Tuolumne Utilities District, 18885 Nugget Blvd., Sonora. For more information on the Groundwater Ambient Monitoring and Assessment program, visit www.waterboards.ca.gov/gama/ and ca.water.usgs.gov/gama/.