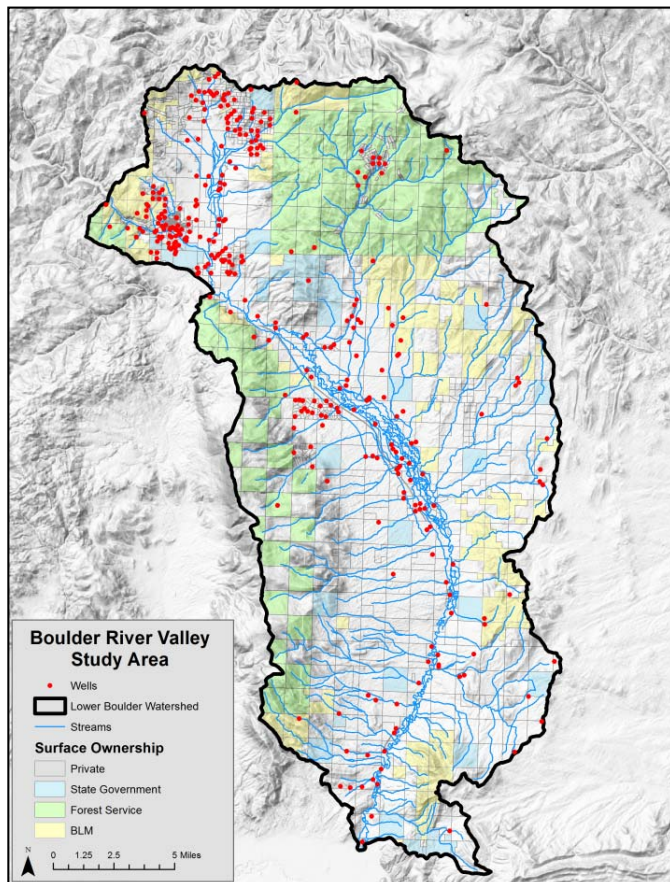


Boulder River Valley Groundwater Investigation:

The Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology (MBMG) Groundwater Investigations Program (GWIP) has been asked to conduct a groundwater study of the Boulder River Valley. The purpose of GWIP is to investigate specific local groundwater issues. More information on GWIP is available at <http://www.mbm.mtech.edu/gwip/gwip.asp>.



It is believed that the alluvial aquifer of the Boulder River provides baseflow to the Boulder River. In its current state, the Boulder River often runs dry in the late summer, eliminating the ability to irrigate, even for senior water rights holders. As such, there are concerns that continued approval of exempt wells in the watershed will adversely impact senior water rights holders. The DEQ is also currently developing a TMDL for metals, sediment and temperature in the Boulder River. This GWIP study will examine the flux of water between the alluvium and the river, the magnitude of impacts that would be expected from existing and potential housing developments in the watershed, and the potential for increasing water availability throughout the year. Water quality samples will also be collected from groundwater and surface waters in the study area.

This will be a two year study, running from July 1, 2011 to June 30, 2013. The area of

study will be the Lower Boulder River Watershed from Boulder to Cardwell (USGS Watershed 1002000605), with the focus being on the alluvial aquifer along the Boulder River.

For the initial phase of the project, wells will be inventoried, and surface water sites (including on irrigation ditches) will be established. Additional wells may be installed where data is needed. These sites will be used to establish a monitoring network. If you know of a site to include, please let us know.

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