

# NRCS Launches NEW Pilot Groundwater Recharge Program

2/28/2022 presentation to Madera RWMG by:

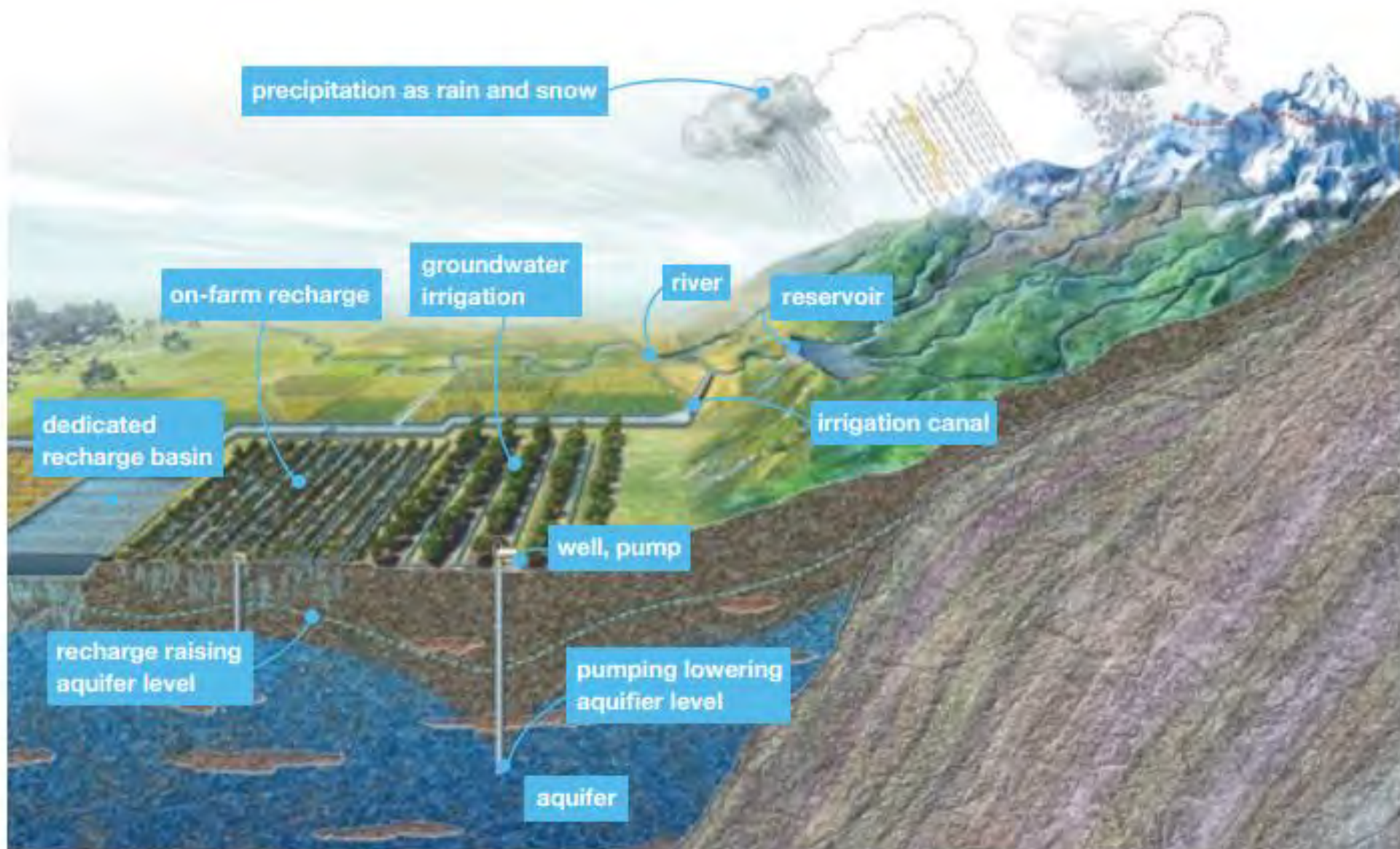
Wendy Rash, Water Quality Specialist, NRCS

Rogell Rogers, Agronomist, Sustainable Conservation

Aysha Massell, CV Water Program Director, Sustainable Conservation

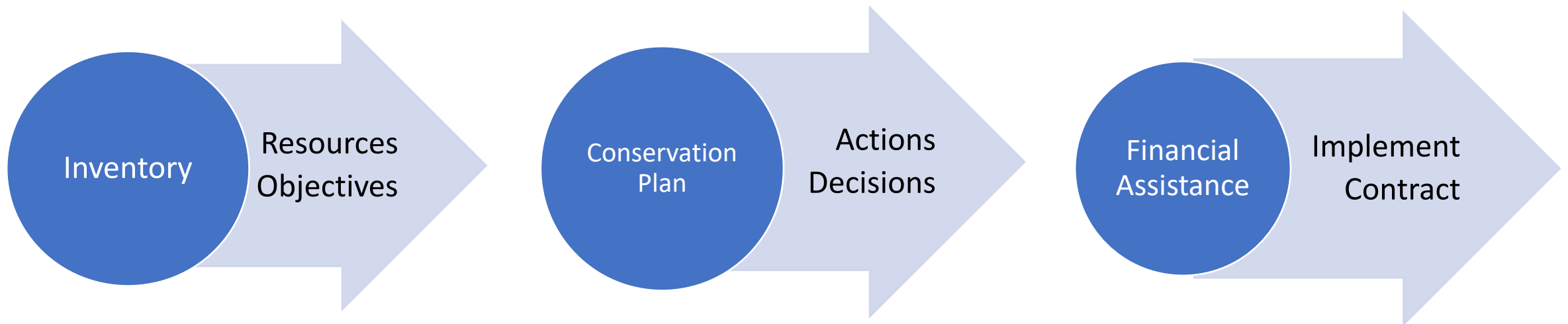


# Overview of recharge



# NRCS Financial assistance programs

- Federal dollars through the Farm Bill Conservation Title
- EQIP- Environmental Quality Incentives Program



# Why a recharge pilot program?

- NRCS Planning Process
  - Resource Concerns
  - Conservation Practices
- Groundwater depletion recognized by NRCS as a Resource Concern
- Interim Conservation Practice Standard developed
  - Must be field tested before being adopted
  - Is it effective at addressing the resource concern?
  - How does it work within our programs?

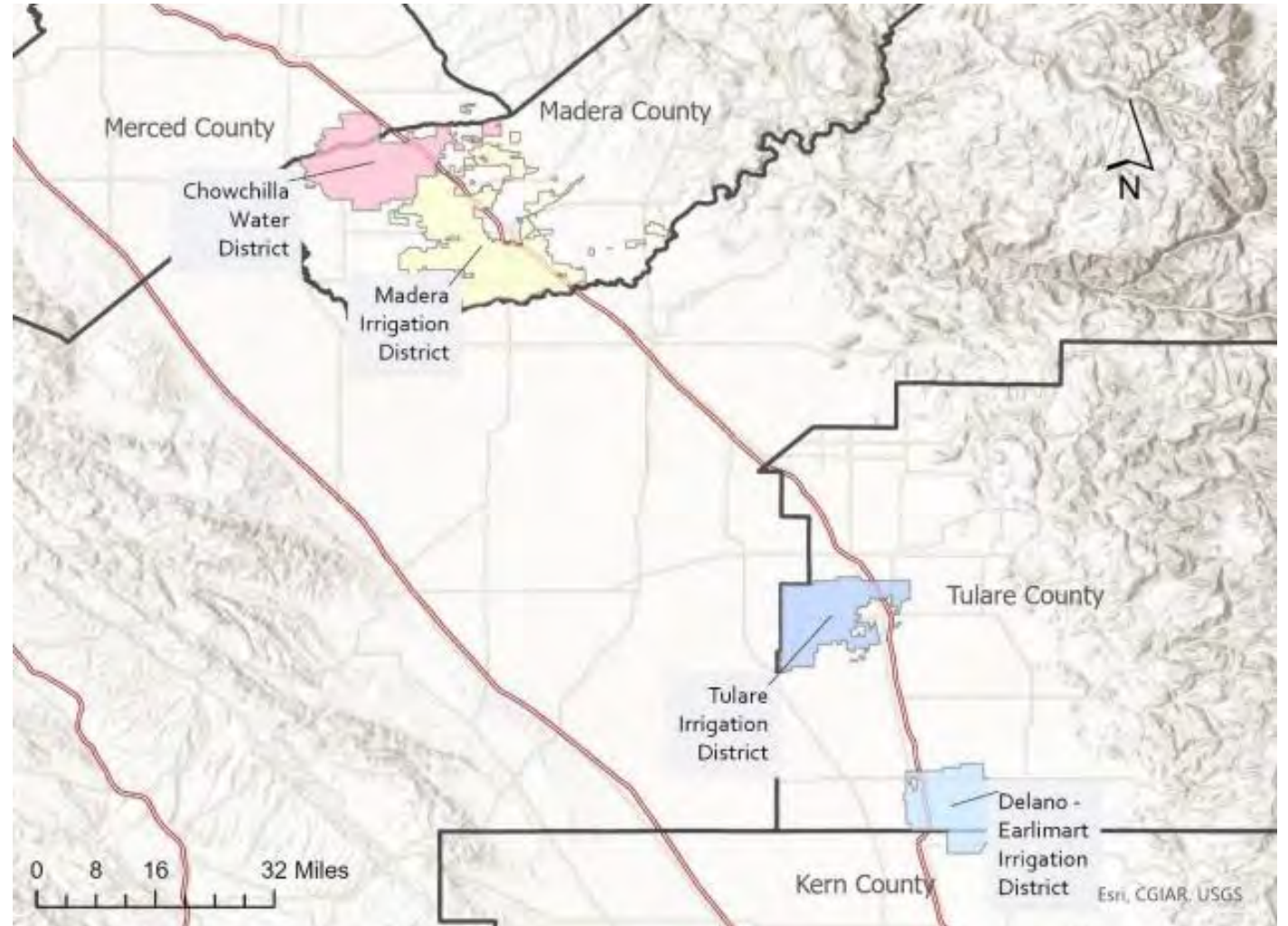
# Recharge Pilot program

- \$2 million total available
- Complete projects will be funded
  - Recharge practices
  - “Supporting” practices

# Program eligibility - Location

Projects must be in one of the following locations:

- Madera County
- Merced County
  - in the Chowchilla Irrigation District boundaries only
- Tulare County
  - in the Tulare Irrigation District or Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District boundaries only
- Kern County
  - in the Delano-Earlimart Irrigation District boundaries only



# Program eligibility – Water access

Projects must EITHER:

- have access to recharge water from an Irrigation District OR
- have access and water rights to winter flood water



# Applicant eligibility

- Water Management Entities (WMEs) such as Irrigation Districts
- Farm-scale applicants such as growers and landowners



# Is this program a good fit?

## Choose the recharge practice:

### Recharge trench or basin

- Permanent feature (15 years) – land taken out of production



### On farm recharge

- Management practice in tandem with agriculture

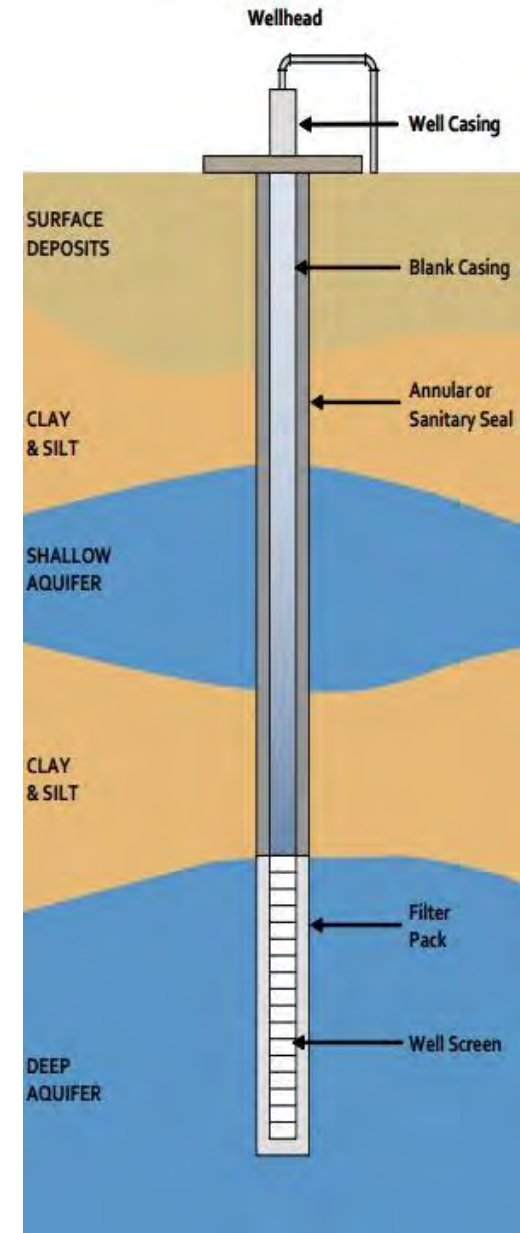


# Is this program a good fit?

## Monitoring:

Is there a nearby well that can be used to monitor changes in groundwater that might be associated with recharge on the site?

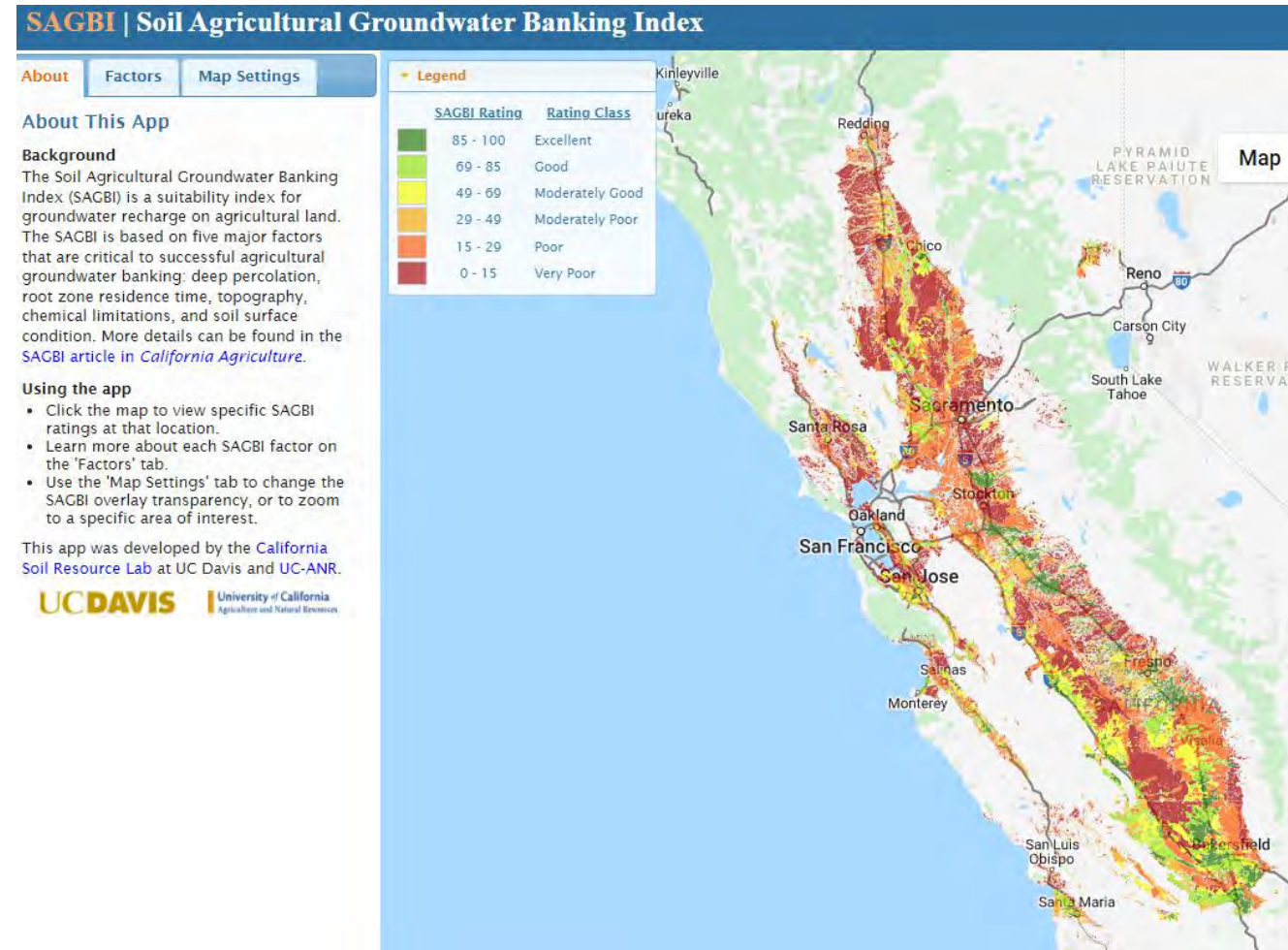
- screened to the appropriate aquifer
- within  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the center of the flooded field or 1,000 feet from the edge of the field



# Is this program a good fit?

## Site suitability:

- Has the project area been identified as a high priority recharge area in a GSP?
- Does your site have sufficient saturated hydraulic conductivity (percolation rates) in the top 5 feet of soil?
  - Check your site's suitability using the SAGBI tool here:  
<https://casoilresource.lawr.ucdavis.edu/sagbi/>

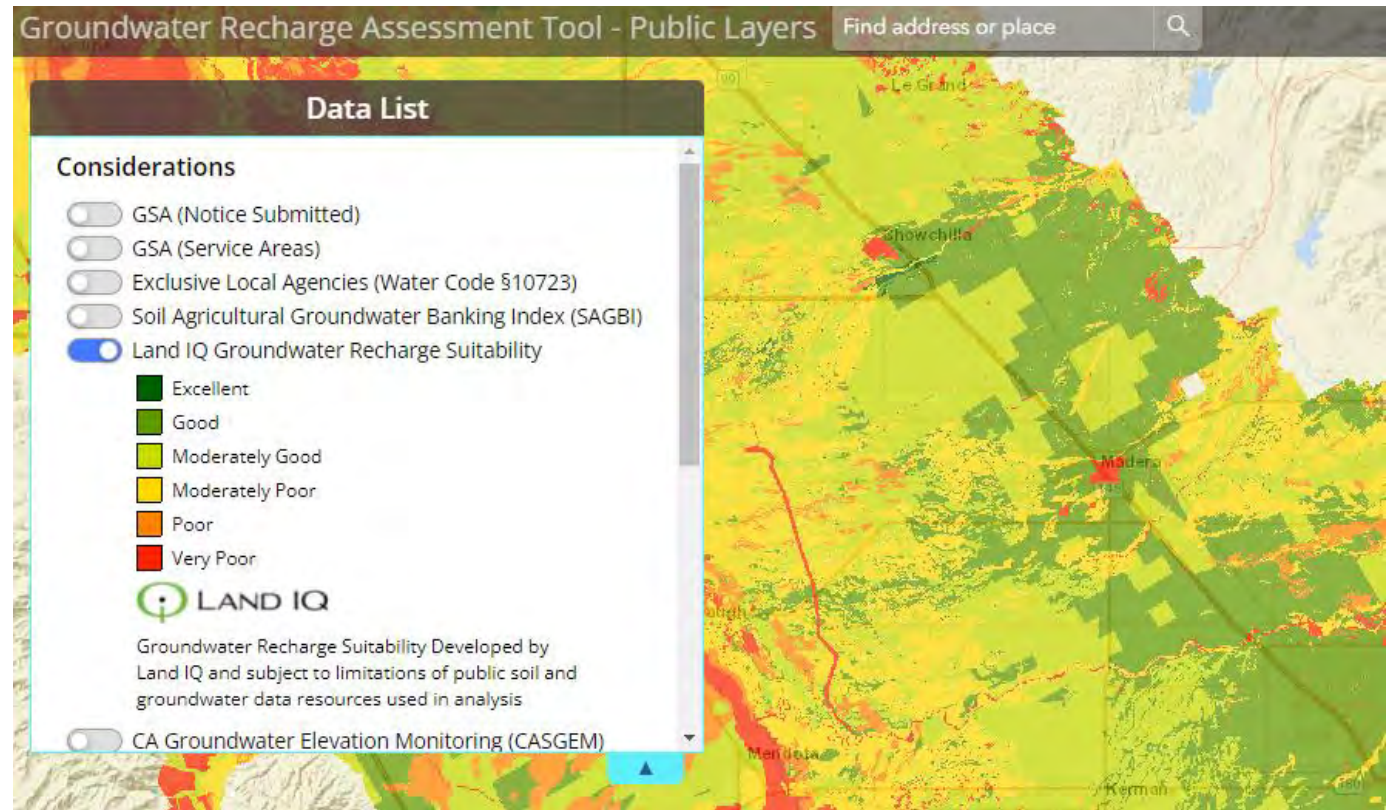


# Is this program a good fit?

Hydrogeologic suitability:

Does your site have connectivity to the aquifer? This information can be found by:

- On-site sub-surface soil investigations (such as deep soil cores, cone penetrometer, or nearby well log data)
- Electromagnetic survey and/or ranking in LandIQ recharge Suitability Tool, available here: <http://gratviewer.earthgenome.org/>

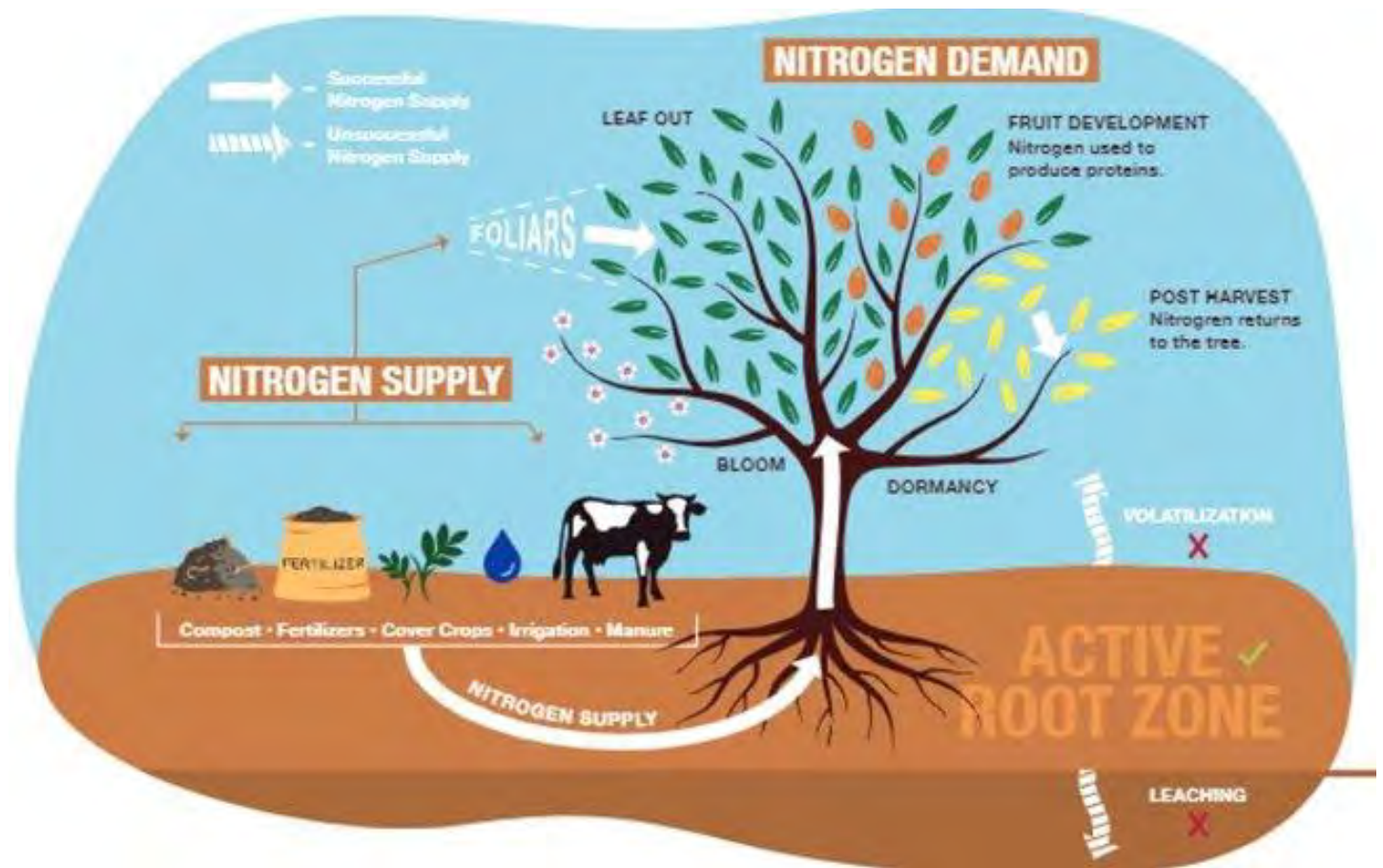


# Is this program a good fit?

For on-farm recharge ONLY (817):

Do you practice excellent nutrient management and integrated pest management?

If not, recharge is not recommended.



*Nitrogen Best Management Practices, Almond Board of California (2020)*

# Financial assistance

These costs will be reimbursed IF you are selected to receive a contract AND when design criteria are met

## Recharge trench or basin (815)

Trench: \$3.56 per cubic yard excavated

Basin: \$4,191.27 per AF storage capacity <10 ac ft

Basin \$3,993.42 per AF storage capacity  $\geq$ 10 ac ft

Cost share payments will occur only once, after construction is completed according to design standards.

# Financial assistance

These costs will be reimbursed IF you are selected to receive a contract AND when design criteria are met

## On farm recharge (817)

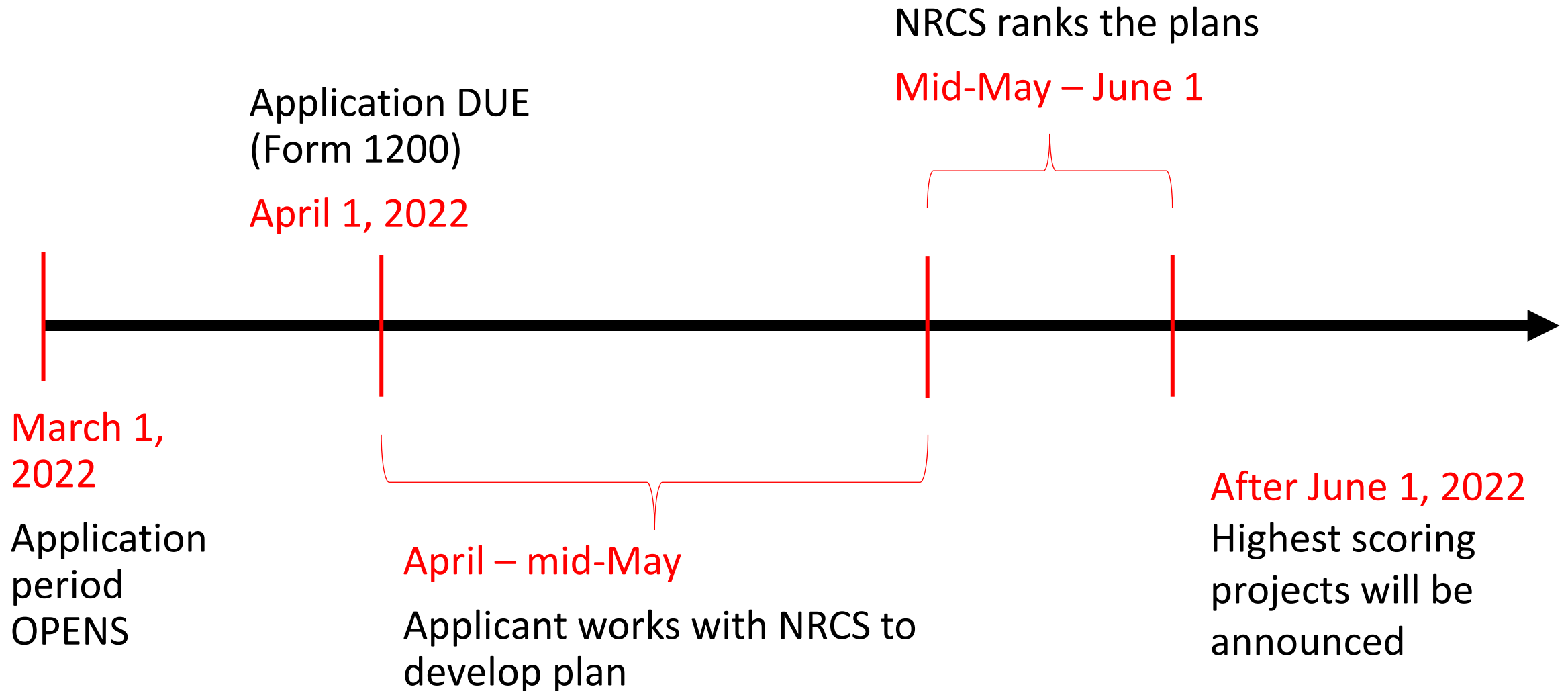
\$99.89 per acre inundated\* <60 acres

\$94.30 per acre inundated\* >=60 acres

Farmers are reimbursed by number of acres inundated with water – this means that if recharge water is NOT available in a given year, then cost share reimbursements will NOT be applicable for that year.

OFR contracts are up to 3 years long and growers are able to get cost share reimbursements for up to 2 out of 3 years, with opportunities to reapply for renewal.

# Deadlines and Timelines





# For more information:

Applications (Form 1200) must be received by the appropriate Field Office by **April 1, 2022**.

Contact your field office to receive the form and get further information.

Madera Service Center	559-674-4628
Merced Service Center	209-722-4119
Bakersfield Service Center	661-281-2765
Visalia Service Center	559-734-8732

## General questions?

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For more information, including program application documents, go to:

<https://suscon.org/nrcs-recharge-pilot/>