

# Desert Hot Springs Walks On Water

...Groundwater That Is!

## Groundwater Guardian Featured ROA

By Marge Cook, Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team  
Reprinted from "The Aquifer" volume 16, number 4, March 2002



“Desert Hot Springs Walks On Water...Groundwater That Is!” was the theme of the first Desert Hot Springs Groundwater University (GU) program held on March 16 and 17, 2002, at the Mission Creek Preserve in Desert Hot Springs, California.

A collaboration between the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team, Mission Springs Water District, and The Wildlands Conservancy, this event was the first community Groundwater University program to be held in the nation outside of The Groundwater Foundation’s successful model Groundwater University established in 1994 and held annually in Nebraska.

The successful two-day event, held at the Mission Creek Preserve managed by The Wildlands Conservancy, was a hands-on camping experience providing students as well as adults an opportunity to learn about groundwater and a variety of related natural resources, especially in the Coachella Valley.

Highlights from the Desert Hot Springs GU program included:

- groundwater testing of the Mission Creek Aquifer lead by Gary Brockman, Mission Springs Water District
- hiking the Mission Creek Preserve lead by Brad Cadman, The Wildlands Conservancy
- surveying the soil of Coachella Valley presented by Sam Cobb, USDA Natural Re-

- sources Conservation District
- discovering how desert animals adapt presented by Laura DiPenti, Palm Springs Desert Museum
- learning the history of groundwater in the Coachella Valley with Sean Milanovich, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- a camp fire dinner and discussion on careers in environmental fields lead by Bill Chilner, Armtec Defense Products, Inc. and Desert Hot Springs Middle School
- watercolor painting and trash can decorating session lead by Jim Taylor, Desert Hot Springs High School
- exploring the legend of Cabot Yerxa--the first person to discover groundwater in Desert Hot Springs, lead by Jason Bruecks, Desert Hot Springs Commission on Cabot’s Old Indian Museum and Pueblo
- a presentation on California’s water resources by Bob Pierotti, California Department of Water Resources
- experimenting with water, rocks and sand conducted by Ramona Daniels, Bureau of Land Management, California Desert Region

The Groundwater University experience for both the students and all of the adults involved proved to be fun, educational, inspiring, and downright “teeth-chattering,” as all smiled



▲ Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team sponsors its first ever Groundwater University event which proves to be a fantastic success!

through the coldest weather to hit the Palm Springs area in the past 11 years. With the success of the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater University premier year, arrangements for “Desert Hot Springs Walks On Water... Groundwater That Is--The Sequel!” are now underway for Desert Hot Springs Groundwater University 2003.

*Editor’s note: The Groundwater Foundation’s Groundwater University event will be held June 18-20, 2002 at the Platte River State Park in Nebraska. A special workshop will be held in conjunction with this event which will provide community educators with training materials to sponsor a Groundwater University on a local level, just as the Desert Hot Springs Groundwater Guardian Team has done. Please see page 10 of “The Aquifer” for more information.*

**Subscribe**  
to “The Aquifer”

Join The Groundwater  
Foundation at  
[www.groundwater.org](http://www.groundwater.org).