

From: [Zahniser, Stephen J](#)
To: [Johnston, Dawn](#)
Cc: [Darrow, Jeffrey W.](#); [Ahn, Michelle](#); [Campbell, Jean K](#); [VanderKooi, Scott P](#); [Sinclair, Daniel A](#); [Benson, Elizabeth \(Liz\)](#)
Subject: Update on USGS Groundwater Sampling Activities – Puna Region / PGV
Date: Tuesday, March 10, 2026 1:56:16 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Aloha Dawn,

I wanted to provide a brief update on the U.S. Geological Survey Pacific Islands Water Science Center groundwater sampling activities associated with the Puna region and the area surrounding Puna Geothermal Venture (PGV).

During Phase I of the study, the USGS PIWSC water quality team conducted groundwater sampling in July and August 2025. Unfortunately, PGV unexpectedly canceled the originally planned July 21, 2025 sampling window, however our team was able to pivot and secure well-owner approvals to move up the sampling of several privately owned groundwater wells. Because travel had already been arranged, this adjustment allowed the field team to efficiently utilize the deployment window. As a result, the two PGV monitoring wells sampled on August 4, 2025, while the other nine groundwater wells were sampled during the week of July 21, 2025, for a total of eleven wells included in the first phase of sampling.

It should be noted, the participation of the local well owners and community members who provided access to their wells and took the time to answer questions from the field teams as well as the flexibility of the field team was instrumental in helping keep the sampling effort on track.

Phase 1 samples were collected for a comprehensive analytical suite that included volatile organic compounds, major and minor ions, rare earth elements, alkalinity, arsenic, dissolved organic carbon, pesticides, total chromium and chromium-6, trace metals, dissolved gases, sulfur hexafluoride, stable isotopes, and per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Standard field parameters were also measured onsite, including water temperature, specific conductance, pH, dissolved oxygen, and turbidity.

Preliminary results from Phase I informed several adjustments to the Phase II sampling plan, including the addition of glyphosate analysis and a more sensitive emerging PFAS analytical method. These additions were incorporated because the standard PFAS method did not detect PFAS compounds in the initial study wells.

Phase II sampling began the week of January 19, 2026, with nine groundwater wells resampled. The team returned to Hawai'i Island in early February to complete sampling of two PGV monitoring wells. However, after traveling to the site on February 9, the team was informed upon arrival that sampling had been postponed. The decision to postpone had been made the previous day, but the notification email was not received until 8:34 a.m. on February 9, after the team had already arrived onsite. Therefore, sampling of PGV monitoring wells MW-4 and MW-5 was subsequently completed on February 17, 2026. Unfortunately, the team discovered that an access port to MW-5 had been removed without prior notification, which prevented collection of the full analytical suite for that well.

Laboratory results from the Phase II samples are beginning to be received, and we will continue reviewing them as they come in. Once the dataset is complete and quality assurance checks are finalized, we will provide a more detailed technical summary of findings. In the meantime, USGS would be happy to schedule time in April to walk through the preliminary results that are currently available, if that would be useful for the County and your team.

Please let me know if it would be helpful to set up a time to discuss the preliminary findings, or if there are any questions in the interim. We appreciate the County's continued coordination and engagement on this work.

Mahalo,

Stephen J Zahniser | [REDACTED] | email: szahniser@usgs.gov
Deputy Center Director | United States Geological Survey (USGS)
Pacific Islands Water Science Center (<https://www.usgs.gov/centers/piwsc>)
Inouye Regional Center | 1845 Wasp Blvd., Bldg. 176 | Honolulu, HI 96818

Project Timeline

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