

NASA scientist keeps eye on Calif. drought

By Frani Halperin, High Country News

Sitting in a place they call the “mall” in the center of NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory campus in Pasadena it’s shady and relaxing. Scientists confab at tables with umbrellas, sipping coffee, laptops open to graphs and charts.

Jay Famiglietti, senior water scientist, is talking about NASA’s latest missions. The space agency isn’t just sending rockets to explore our galaxy—they’re launching satellites to look back at Earth.

Missions with names like “GRACE” are “amazing”—not just for their bird’s-eye view of our home planet but for what that perspective is telling us about our challenging water future.

“Sadly the picture that our work is painting is one that is very compelling and points to a very complicated water future where the availability of water will become more contentious and groundwater in many parts of the world is disappearing,” Framiglietti said.

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