


Groundwater Essentials

Understanding the unseen resource



Presented By
Gail Andrews, OSU
Bob Mahler, UI
Michael Barber, WSU

Groundwater Facts

- Scientists estimate groundwater accounts for more than 95% of all available fresh water.
- Approximately 50% of Americans obtain all or part of their drinking water from groundwater.
- Nearly 95% of rural residents rely on groundwater for their drinking supply.
- About half of irrigated cropland uses groundwater.
- Approximately one third of industrial water needs are fulfilled using groundwater.
- About 40% of river flow nationwide (on average) depends on groundwater.

Important Terminology

- Aquifer
 - ◆ Confined versus Unconfined
- Hydraulic Conductivity (K)
- Darcy's Law
 - ◆ $V = -K (dH/dL)$

More Terms

- Sustainable Yield
- Drawdown
- Boundary Conditions

