

Summary

Salinity Network Workgroup Meeting/Webinar

(August 13, 2014)

The four presenters at the Salinity Network Workgroup (SNW) webinar were: Rick Copeland (RC) of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), Jim Cichon (JC) of the Florida Geological Survey (FGS), Kate Muldoon (KM) of DEP, and Scott Prinos (SP) of the US Geological Survey (USGS).

RC reviewed why the SNW exists. Since 1998, Florida has received below normal rainfall. The Upper Floridan aquifer (UFA) has suffered the most. It has been documented that groundwater levels (GWLs) have declined and specific conductance has increased. As such the SNW was formed and one of its objectives is to relay groundwater monitoring data and information to the public in terms that are easily understood. The SNW has decided to develop two indices, one for GWLs and one for salinity in groundwater. For GWL, the index is passed on percentile rankings (PRs). The SNW decided to conduct a pilot for the PR index. The purpose is to overcome the obstacles associated with multiple agencies working on a common problem. A pilot study was initiated to develop a GWL PR map for May, 2010. RC went over the progress of the study. It is almost complete. However, entities need to edit the second draft of the written summary of the project. RC will send out the second draft for review in September.

JC discussed the status of the statewide UFA potentiometric map and the production of future maps. The goal is to produce side-by-side potentiometric maps, along with GWL PR maps in September (wet) and in May (dry) of each year.

KM gave an update of the status of the Florida Water Catalog (Water-CAT) with regard to well data. The Water-CAT is not a database for data, rather it is a database on monitoring stations in Florida. She solicited ideas for some of the data “fields”. The attendees addressed her ideas to everyone’s satisfaction. More information on the Water-CAT can be found on the FWRMC website, or by visiting www.Water-CAT.org.

RC discussed ideas for a Salinity GW Quality Index. It was based on Total Dissolved Solids (TDS). RC proposed thresholds of 500, 1,000, and 10,000. SC gave a USGS perspective of using TDS as the index. It appeared that SC is a better index and attendees countered and suggested that SC could be the index; not TDS. It turns out that SC mathematically can be used to estimate the TDS values and the advantage of using SC, rather than TDS, is that there are many more monitoring wells with SC data than with TDS data.

At the next SNW meeting, RC will give a presentation on the use of SC and how it could be used to estimate TDS values.