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Director of Florida Geological Survey speaks in China

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~Dr. Jon Arthur invited to speak to Chinese geologists and students~

TALLAHASSEE - Dr. Jon Arthur, Director of the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Florida Geological Survey returned stateside this weekend after giving three lectures in two cities in Southern China on karst geology, sinkholes and aquifer vulnerability.

Arthur was invited to speak at the International Training Course on Karst Hydrogeological Investigation, Dynamic Monitoring and Application in River Basins. Additionally, he lectured to the Department of Geographical Sciences at Southwest University in Chongqing. Arthur has 30 years of knowledge and research with the Department, starting at the Florida Geological Survey in 1984 as a research assistant. In June, Arthur was named President-Elect of the Association of American State Geologists.

"We are very proud of Dr. Arthur and the accomplishments of the Florida Geological Survey," said DEP Secretary Herschel T. Vinyard. "This is a clear acknowledgement of the world-class scientists we are fortunate to have at the Department and the important work this program does."

At the International Research Center on Karst sponsored by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization in Guilin, China, Arthur gave two presentations Nov. 25. The first presentation explained sinkhole types and occurrences in Florida and the other covered karst aquifer vulnerability. Additionally, Arthur lectured on Aquifer Vulnerability Modelling in Karst at the Department of Geographical Sciences in Southwest University in Chongqing.

Karst aquifers yield 25 percent of water to the Earth's population. These aquifers are highly complex and vulnerable to contamination. More than 90 percent of Florida's drinking water comes from Florida's aquifers, most of which are karst-related.

Geoscience professionals worldwide met at the training course, including Dr. George Veni, the National Cave and Karst Research Institute (USA) Director and Dr. Mikhail Bogdanov, the General Director of Russia's Geologic Research Institute of Construction. The exchange of information during this trip provided opportunity to learn more about the scientific challenges regarding karst worldwide.

"It was an honor to be chosen as a lecturer for this international course and to speak at Southwest University in Chongqing," Dr. Arthur said. "This was a wonderful opportunity to share the Department's knowledge of karst geology in Florida and also gain a wealth of knowledge to bring back to Florida from international experts in karst."

Arthur also met with Professor Jiang Yuchi, Director of the International Research Center for Karst, to discuss cooperative opportunities between the Center and the Department's Florida Geological Survey.

This trip followed Dr. Arthur's presentation to the National Research Council of National Academies Board of Earth Sciences and Resources' Committee on Geological and Geotechnical Engineering on Nov. 13, in Washington, D.C. Dr. Arthur presented information on the state's sinkhole vulnerability study that the Florida Geological Survey just started, as well as the general topic of sinkholes, including the impacts on the economy, environment and human health.

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