



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

## NEWS RELEASE

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### **SFWMD Installs Deep Exploratory Wells in Central Florida** *Test wells will help evaluate the aquifer 2,700 feet below ground*

**Polk County, FL** – To support and sustain the water supply in Central Florida, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) is currently drilling test wells up to 2,700 feet deep in previously unexplored portions of the Lower Floridan Aquifer.

“The Lower Floridan Aquifer in this area is largely uncharted territory, and its potential for boosting regional supplies is not yet known,” said Terrie Bates, Director of the SFWMD Water Resources Division. “This could be a significant and viable alternative source to meet water needs in future years.”

The SFWMD Governing Board approved a contract for additional well drilling and testing, a continuation of an overall exploratory program initiated earlier this year. Drilling sites include locations in Osceola and Polk counties.

Traditional water supplies, especially from shallow aquifers, are limited in many parts of the region. Alternative water sources, such as the deep Lower Floridan Aquifer, are being explored for potential use to meet future public water supply demands.

Data from the wells will be provided to the Central Florida Water Initiative, a partnership of utilities, stakeholders, the South Florida Water Management, St. Johns Water Management and Southwest Florida Water Management districts. The goal of the initiative is to gather additional information on alternative water supply that will potentially increase regional water supplies and improve the ability to protect natural systems.



*(Click on the picture for a larger version.)*

The drilling operation is a meticulous, time-consuming effort. When drilling half a mile below ground, it takes 50 minutes for the excavated rock to reach the surface.

### Lower Floridan Aquifer

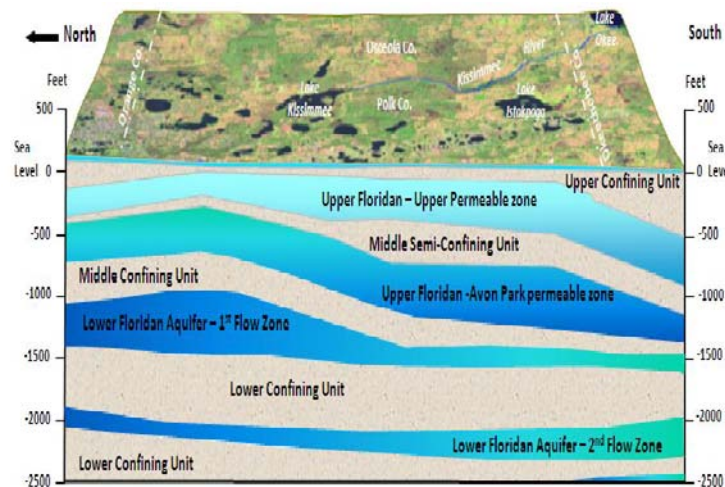
In Florida, much of the public water supply comes from groundwater. Florida's aquifers, which supply more than 8 billion gallons of water each day, are among the most productive in the world.

The Floridan Aquifer System is the main source of groundwater in the Kissimmee Basin. It is comprised of multiple layers of rocks overlain by unconsolidated sediments. Some of these rock layers are porous and hold water, while others impede its movement.

The permeable zones of the Upper Floridan aquifers are the main portions used for water supply. Much less is known about the deeper portions of the aquifer.

Research currently under way on the Lower Floridan will help determine the aquifer's depth, water quality and other factors that will help identify its potential, long-term sustainability as a water resource.

By compiling and evaluating data from the test wells, the SFWMD and partner agencies will have a clearer picture of how the Lower Floridan Aquifer operates and how to better manage and protect the region's water.



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### About the South Florida Water Management District

*The South Florida Water Management District is a regional, governmental agency that oversees the water resources in the southern half of the state – 16 counties from Orlando to the Keys. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. The agency mission is to manage*

*and protect water resources of the region by balancing and improving water quality, flood control, natural systems and water supply. A key initiative is cleanup and restoration of the Everglades.*