



CANADA'S GROUNDWATER RESOURCES

Compiled and Edited by Alfonso Rivera
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**“A MUST-READ AND
REFERENCE FOR
HYDROGEOLOGY
STUDENTS,
TEACHERS AND
PRACTITIONERS.”**

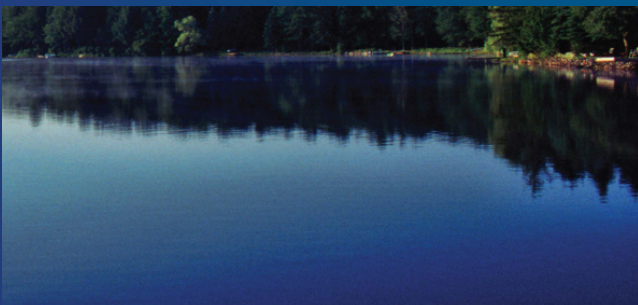
**—BOB LEECH,
SENIOR SCIENTIST,
AECOM**

Groundwater is essential for life in arid and semiarid regions. It is also important in humid regions, and is one of the fundamental requirements for maintenance of natural landscapes and aquatic ecosystems. Many of Canada's most sensitive ecosystems are dependent on groundwater. Yet, groundwater remains a relatively unknown resource, one which is difficult for the Canadian public and for decision makers to recognize and/or understand.

Most fresh water—other than that frozen in glaciers—is found underground. In fact, all of Earth's water found in lakes and rivers (surface water) accounts for only a tiny fraction of the world's available freshwater resources (less than one percent). Ninety-nine percent of the Earth's freshwater supply is groundwater found in aquifers.

These numbers are for the world as a total entity. Here in Canada, we do not know the ratio between available surface freshwater resource (all rivers and lakes), and groundwater in aquifers, although we believe there is more groundwater than surface water, as with the rest of the world. Should this hypothesis be confirmed, the consequences would be enormous, making groundwater a strategic resource in coping with climate change, droughts, and pollution.

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