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SINKHOLES AND THE ENGINEERING AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS OF KARST

PROCEEDINGS OF THE NINTH MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE

September 6–10, 2003
Huntsville, Alabama

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Foreword

The ninth conference on the applied aspects of karst marks a turning point. The first conference in 1984 was called simply **The First Multidisciplinary Conference on Sinkholes**. It was organized and sponsored by the Florida Sinkhole Research Institute, at the University of Central Florida, of which I was the Director. The Institute sponsored two additional conferences in 1987 and 1989 before it was closed due to budget constraints in 1992.

In 1993 the University of Central Florida, home of the Florida Sinkhole Research Institute, co-sponsored the **Fourth Multidisciplinary Conference on Sinkholes and the Engineering & Environmental Impacts of Karst** along with my new employer, P.E. LaMoreaux & Associates, Inc. (PELA). Anyone who has worked in karst regularly is familiar with the name of Philip E. LaMoreaux, and it was only natural that his company would continue this series of professional conferences on karst. The fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth, conferences were hosted and organized by PELA, with the support of various professional societies, principally the National Groundwater Association and later the Geo-Institute (G-I) of the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE). However, it is important that all the interested professionals realize that during those years PELA took the financial responsibility for the conference and invested tens of thousands of dollars in its support.

At the Eighth Karst Conference, in 2001 in Louisville, Kentucky, interested parties met and formulated a plan for the two most relevant professional societies to assume management, and the financial risk, for the meeting: the G-I of ASCE and the National Groundwater Association (NGWA), along with the support and assistance of PELA. All parties agreed that the meeting should continue to run approximately as it always had. For practical purposes, it was also agreed that the G-I would take the lead in hosting the next meeting.

As a result, in 2003, for the first time, the (G-I) of ASCE is hosting and organizing this conference. The meeting was planned and organized by the Karst Task Force of the G-I. Members of the Karst Task Force and the Chairs of other G-I Committees all played a role in organizing the program. Those who played major roles are listed below. It is impossible to list all the reviewers who assisted in ensuring the fine quality of the papers you will hear and see.

According to ASCE guidelines, all papers for this conference were reviewed and edited prior to publication. However, because various sessions were organized by different Chairpersons, the exact details of those reviews varied. In most cases, two reviewers critiqued the paper and offered suggestions for improvement, varying from

minor to a complete rewrite, or outright rejection. However, some papers received only one review. In one or two cases only, a paper was discovered at the last minute that had "fallen through the cracks" and not been part of the standard editing process. Because this was not the fault of the authors, I personally reviewed these papers and made a decision as to whether they were of adequate professional quality to be included herein. While the appearance of our Proceedings will be different, because it is now being published by the ASCE, I believe that the diligent work of our many Chairpersons, listed below, will prove to be very worthwhile and that the quality of our papers this year will be the best we have ever had.

A special thanks goes to Carol Bower who helped lead me through the steps of organizing the Karst Task Force and getting this meeting approved by the G-I and ASCE. Jacquelyn Quash, ASCE Conference Director, also played a major role in physically organizing the conference: negotiating with the hotel, hosting the website, and getting the Proceedings published. Thanks to these ladies and to the other ASCE staff who helped make this conference a reality. I am confidant that with the support of the G-I this year's meeting will be bigger and better than ever.

Barry F. Beck, C.P.G., P.G.
Chairman of the Karst Task Force of
The Geo-Institute of
The American Society of Civil Engineers

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