

2016 AGI Critical Issues Forum

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Groundwater is often a "transboundary" resource, shared by many groups of people across town, county, state, and international boundaries. Changes in groundwater resources can create unique challenges requiring high levels of cooperation and innovation amongst stakeholder groups, from individuals to the state and federal government levels.

The High Plains Aquifer (HPA), which spans eight states from South Dakota to Texas, is overlain by about 20 percent of the nation's irrigated agricultural land, and provides about 30 percent of the groundwater used for irrigation in the country according to the U.S. Geological Survey. **Work by the Kansas Geological Survey indicates that some parts of the aquifer are already effectively exhausted for agricultural purposes; some parts are estimated to have a lifespan of less than 25 years; and other areas remain generally unaffected** (Buchanan et al., 2015).

The 2016 Critical Issues Forum was a 1-½ day meeting covering multiple aspects of groundwater depletion in the High Plains. Break-out sessions and participant discussions identified lessons learned and best practices from the High Plains Aquifer experience that might apply to other regions facing changes in the Earth system. A report summarizing the conclusions from the Forum is now available.

For information on this or future Critical Issues Forums, please contact Cassaundra Rose (crose@americangeosciences.org).



View selected footage from the 2016 Critical Issues Forum

The 2016 Critical Issues Forum was hosted by the Payne Institute for Earth Resources at the Colorado School of Mines, CO.

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