Maintenance of the Kansas Geological Survey's Data Services to the National Groundwater Monitoring Network and Establishment of a Trend Well Network in the Kansas River Alluvial Aquifer

June 14, 2019

Funded by the

U.S. Geological Survey-Grant G17AC00170 07/01/2017 to 06/30/2019



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Kansas Geological Survey Open-File Report 2019-17

GEOHYDROLOGY



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Introduction

The National Ground-water Monitoring Network (NGWMN) is an effort led by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) to establish a network of selected monitoring wells across the country to facilitate the planning and management of groundwater resources. The NGWMN serves as a single data portal that retrieves, in real time, construction, lithology, depth-to-water measurements, and water-quality data that are maintained and served to the portal from a variety of participating local, state, and federal sources. The NGWMN can be accessed at the following URL: http://cida.usgs.gov/ngwmn/.

In 2016, the USGS provided funding support through Cooperative Agreement G16AC00017 to the Kansas Geological Survey (KGS) to become a data provider to the NGWMN. The project period started January 1, 2016, and ended December 31, 2016. Under this agreement, the KGS evaluated monitoring sites for inclusion in the NGWMN, worked with USGS staff to populate the data portal with monitoring well sites that met a set of minimum data standards, and then developed a series of web services that allowed the NGWMN real-time data access to the state's well construction, lithology, and depth-to-water measurements records.

In 2017, the USGS provided funding support to the KGS through Cooperative Agreement G16AC00363 to maintain persistent data services to the NGWMN. This includes preserving existing web services and applying routine updates to existing network sites, which includes removing well sites that are no longer viable and uploading replacement and new well site locations. The project period started October 10, 2016, and ended September 30, 2017.

In 2018, the KGS was awarded funding from the USGS under Cooperative Agreement G17AC00170 to update the Kansas portion of the well registry, maintain the persistent data services to the NGWMN, and install a network of trend wells in the Kansas River alluvial aquifer, a stream valley in Kansas with major population growth and economic activity that lacks an active water-level observation network at the state level. This two-year project started July 1, 2017, and was completed June 4, 2019. This report serves as the final technical report for the project.

Existing Kansas NGWMN Well Sites

The NGWMN started serving Kansas-based groundwater data in September 2016 from 133 surveillance wells- those that are measured annually during the winter months- and 4 trend wells, which are true observation wells that record water levels in real time throughout the year and across seasons (Wilson, 2016). In 2017, a total of 8 wells were removed either because down-hole access was blocked, the well was plugged, or the site had incomplete or missing lithology; an additional 50 wells sites- 6 trend and 44 surveillance- were reviewed and added to the NGWMN (Wilson, 2017). All of these well sites are part of the larger Kansas Cooperative Water-Level Network (fig. 1), a collection of approximately 1,400 wells measured annually by the KGS in cooperation with the Kansas Department of Agriculture, Division of Water Resources (Miller et al., 1998).

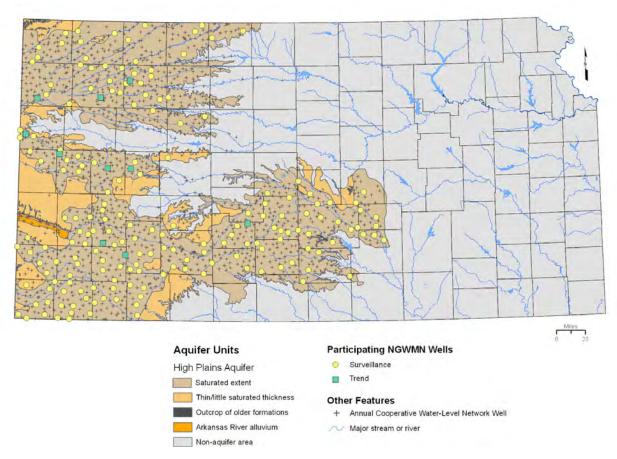


Figure 1. Kansas Cooperative Water-Level Network and participating 2017 High Plains aquifer NGWMN sites.

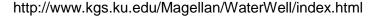
The vast majority of measurements take place in the month of January, typically in irrigation wells using steel or electric tapes, which have precisions down to hundredths of a foot. Customized software developed by the KGS combined with global positioning systems are used to ensure the same wells are measured each year and to conduct on-site data validations of depth-to-water measurements. The KGS further identifies 7% of the wells, randomly selected each year, to be re-measured by a second person within 24 hours of the initial visit. Referred to as "QA" wells, these extra measurements serve to provide quality assurance of the collected data. Additional statistical and GIS reviews are conducted later on the entire data set to identify abnormal or anomalous measurements. If necessary, well sites are re-measured the same day or within a month, depending on the circumstances.

The Kansas Cooperative Network also consists of a growing collection of continuously monitored wells. Referred to as "index wells," these sites are equipped with pressure transducers that record water levels every hour and, through the use of telemetry systems, provide real-time access to water-level data throughout the year (Butler et al., 2018). Index wells are also manually measured throughout the calendar year, typically every three to four months.

Depth-to-water measurements are stored in an Oracle-based enterprise-level relational database (RDMS) called the Water Information Storage and Retrieval Database (WIZARD). WIZARD evolved from the U.S. Geological Survey's Ground Water Site Inventory in the mid-1990s (Hausberger et al., 1998) and today represents the largest repository of depth-to-water measurements in Kansas. Measured well sites are used to track temporal changes in water table elevations and estimates of water availability. WIZARD currently consists of more than 57,000 well sites with more than 630,000 water-level measurements. Data can be accessed at the following URL:

http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Magellan/WaterLevels/index.html

A key feature to the NGWMN data framework is that participating wells must have associated construction and lithology descriptions. In Kansas, this information can be obtained from the Water Well Completion Records Database (WWC5). Since the mid-1970s, water well drilling companies have been required to provide location, type, use, casing, lithology, and other information to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment any time a well is constructed, re-constructed, or plugged. The KGS stores more than 277,000 WWC5 records (fig. 2) in an Oracle RDMS and serves these data to the public through the following URL:



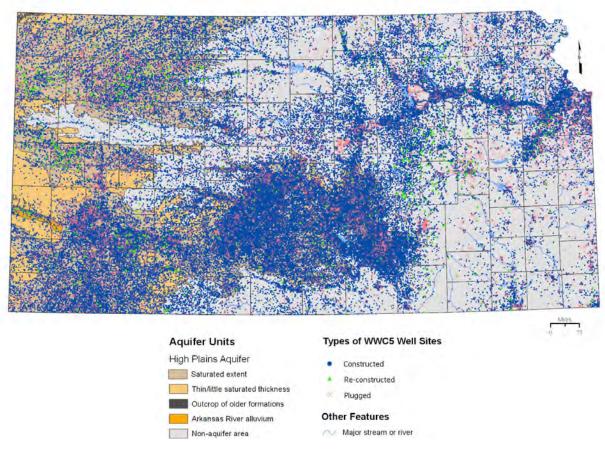


Figure 2. WWC5 well sites.

Existing Kansas NGWMN Data Streams

Data are streamed to the NGWMN through a series of web services, standardized protocols by which data are transmitted and shared across the internet. The Kansas web services were developed as a single Adobe ColdFusion component, stored on a replicated computer cluster that distributes workloads between two Apache web servers. The ColdFusion component has four methods, one representing each service (e.g., water levels, lithology, screens, and casings), supports REST protocol, and returns XML-formatted web documents.

Each of the four methods provided under the Kansas web service is called using a URL-based variable along with a list of one or more site IDs for NGWMN wells. A list of the methods for an example well/site number is shown below.

- Water Levels Method
 - o http://maps.kgs.ku.edu/geohydro/wizard/services/data.cfc?method=WaterLevels&sites=371237100455301
- Lithology Method
 - o http://maps.kgs.ku.edu/geohydro/wizard/services/data.cfc?method=Lithology&sites=371237100455301
- Casing Method
- Screens Method
 - $\verb|Omiting= | http://maps.kgs.ku.edu/geohydro/wizard/services/data.cfc? \verb|method=Screens| & sites = 371237100455301 | linear content of the content of the$

A more descriptions of each process can be found in the report "Establishing Kansas as a Data Provider to the National Groundwater Monitoring Network" (Wilson, 2016).

Kansas 2018 and 2019 Updates to the NGWMN

At the conclusion of the 2018 and 2019 water-level collection campaigns and subsequent data review and follow-up, the KGS assessed the participating NGWMN wells to make sure the sites were still measurable and to determine whether the annual change in the water table was representative of aquifer conditions for given areas. Table 1 lists wells that were dropped from the NGWMN data portal, the reason for removal, and whether the well was replaced. All of these actions occurred after the 2018 measurement runs.

No wells were identified for removal after the 2019 season; however, the display option for trend well 391244101501901 was turned off in the NGWMN data portal. This leaves the well in the data registry but effectively removes the site from public queries through the NGWMN interface. A review of the continuously collected water levels indicate the well had a poor hydraulic connection to the aquifer caused by fine-grained sediments filling the sump and screens. The well was redeveloped in the fall of 2018, which re-established the hydraulic connection between the well and aquifer. The site will be monitored and visited throughout the summer and fall of 2019. If water levels continue to reflect appropriate responses to barometric pressure and pumping, the well's display option will be turned back on within the NGWMN data portal.

Table 1 Kansas Wells Removed in 2018 and 2019 From the NGWMN Data Portal							
Site Number Legal Description Reason for Removal							
395518099104001	01S 16W 31CBB	Dry well. No replacement.					
374924100325901	26S 30W 01ABC	Spotty tape. Replaced with 375309100291401.					
371252101084201	32S 35W 32DCD	Fear of breaking tape in well. No replacement.					
391244101501901	10S 41W 01DAA 01	Poor hydraulic connection. Under further evaluation.					

Additional wells from the Kansas Cooperative Water-Level Network were reviewed for inclusion in the NGWMN to enhance distribution and increase the number of wells involved in the program. Sites were selected based on their spatial distribution relative to current participating wells along with the minimum data standards of an established annual measurement history of at least five years and the availability of WWC5 driller logs containing construction, screening, and lithology information.

Fourteen wells within the High Plains aquifer region of Kansas were selected and classified as surveillance wells based on their annual measurement frequencies (Table 2). All of these sites are located in areas that have active groundwater pumping (Fross et al., 2012; Whittemore et al., 2016) and therefore have been designated as part of the "Documented Changes" subnetwork of the NGWMN.

Table 2 Kansas High Plains Aquifer Wells Added in 2018 and 2019 To the NGWMN Data Portal								
Site Number	Legal Description	Well Depth	Local Aquifer	Replaced Well				
391516101144801	09S 35W 20DCA 01	187	Ogallala Formation					
391622101311101	09S 38W 13BCC 01	166	Ogallala Formation					
383152101395101	17S 39W 31DAB 01	188	Ogallala Formation					
382202098391202	19S 12W 28DBC 02	35	Pleistocene Pliocene Series					
381649097443602	20S 04W 27DBD 01	126	Pleistocene Pliocene Series					
380057098264301	23S 10W 29DCA 01	88	Quaternary System					
375536100465502	24S 32W 36ABC 01	258	Ogallala Formation					
375309100291401	25S 29W 10DDC 01	295	Ogallala Formation	374924100325901				
374111098464801	27S 13W 19A 01	202	Quaternary System					
374141099240301	27S 19W 16DBD 01	185	Quaternary System					
370910100422701	33S 31W 28BBC 01	540	Ogallala Formation					
370434100405203	34S 31W 22BDD 03	215	Ogallala Formation					
370710100530001	34S 33W 02CBA 01	622	Ogallala Formation					
370033100534202	35S 33W 15ABC 02	441	Ogallala Formation					

A second objective of this project was the completion of a trend well network in the Kansas River alluvial aquifer. Located in the northeast portion of the state, the river and its hydraulically connected alluvial aquifer are the primary sources of water for the region. Long-term, historic water-level monitoring is sparse and currently, no organized groundwater monitoring network encompasses the entire extent of the aquifer.

After the notification of award for this contract, which calls for the installation of five continuous water-level recording trend wells in the Kansas River alluvial aquifer, the KGS unexpectedly received additional funds from the Kansas Legislature to study and monitor groundwater resources in the Kansas River alluvium. Together, the USGS NGWMN and state contracts were used to install a total of 10 trend wells in the valley.

Well sites were chosen based on a relatively uniform distribution up and down the Kansas River valley. In addition, the KGS tried to select sites that are near existing USGS stream gages and that supplemented or replaced historically measured wells that were still in existence but determined to be unmeasurable or questionable in terms of their connection to the aquifer. Table 3 lists the site number, other identification number, legal description, well depth, the site number of the replaced observation well, and the nearest USGS stream gaging station (when applicable).

Table 3 Kansas River Alluvial Aquifer Trend Wells								
Site Number	Other ID	Legal Description	Well Depth	Replaced Observation Well	Gaging Station			
390843096381401	RL01	10S 07E 34BAA	50	None	None			
391053096260901	RL02	10S 09E 17BDD	37	391055096261701	None			
391027096165701	WB01	10S 10E 15DDC	37	391029096171301	06887500			
390735095575601	SN01	11S 13E 04AAD	46.5	390731095575801	None			
390519095445302	SN02	11S 15E 16DCA	64.2	390519095445301	06888990			
390418095310801	JF01	11S 17E 27BBB	43	390407095310901	None			
390024095224001	DG01	12S 20E 17CCBC	66.5	390006095132301	06891080			
385624095093702	DG02	13S 20E 11BAA	70	385624095093701	None			
385908094574001	LV01	12S 22E 27BBA	65	None	06892350			
390332094455103	WY01	11S 24E 29DDC	65	390319094460802	06892518			

The KGS used its Geoprobe direct-push rig to install the Kansas River alluvial observation wells, which are 2 inches in diameter. The first well was installed in August 2017 (fig. 3) followed by installation of the rest of the network during the summer and fall of 2018. Electrical conductivity (EC) profiles, taken with direct-push logging tools, were used to determine subsurface lithology and the screening intervals (see Appendix A of this report). Each well was equipped with a pressure transducer and data telemetry unit to record and transmit hourly water levels. KGS professionally licensed geologists and scientific staff members completed site investigations, landowner contacts, EC profiling, and well drilling and installation.



Figure 3. KGS staff operating the Geoprobe direct-push rig to install trend well DG01 (site number 390024095224001). DG01 replaced a USGS well (site number 390006095132301). The green box housing and well in the photo is the USGS well before the equipment was removed and the well plugged.

As of the date of this report, a total of 210 wells are being served from the KGS to the NGWMN system; of those, 192 are surveillance wells and 18 are trend wells (fig. 4). Of the 10 newly installed Kansas River alluvial aquifer wells, only RL1, site number 390843096381401, has not yet been included in the data registry. The KGS has been working with vendors to explore different telemetry options to use with this well and others in the future. Once equipped, the well will be included in the NGWMN.

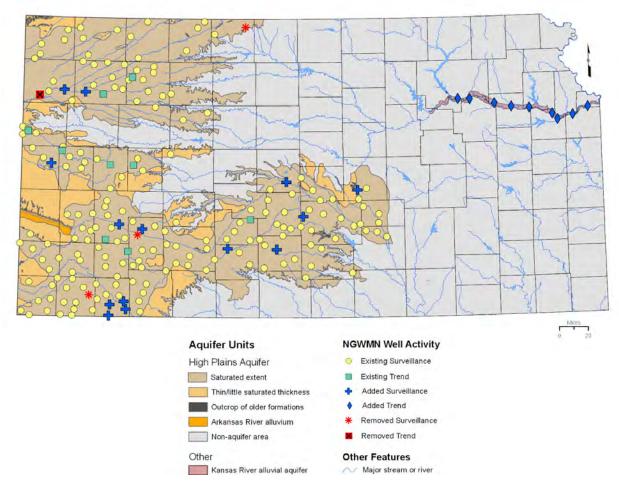


Figure 4. Status and 2018–2019 update activities to KGS-based NGWMN wells.

Finally, some small adjustments to the Kansas NGWMN web services were made during this project period. At the request of the USGS, the "Lithology" and "WaterLevels" methods of the Kansas NGWMN web service were slightly modified to better clarify units of measures related to lithologic descriptions and accuracy of water-level measurements. In addition, the KGS web services were updated to include the computed daily average depth to water for the newly established trend well network in the Kansas River alluvial aquifer and a pressure transducer in well 373925100395301, one of the first trend wells included in the NGWMN, was replaced

Future Developments

The KGS has entered into a fourth grant and cooperative agreement with the USGS. This two-year project, slated to start July 15, 2019, will work to continue to maintain the Kansas-based web services to the NGWMN, making any needed changes and well additions after the Kansas Cooperative Network measurements are made in the winters of 2020 and 2021. In addition, this new project will load all appropriate Kansas Cooperative Water-Level Network wells into the NGWMN to support the USGS High Plains aquifer water-level study. The third objective of this project will be to provide funds to redevelop four trend wells that have been in operation for more than a decade to assure continued quality hydraulic connections to the High Plains aquifer.

Acknowledgments

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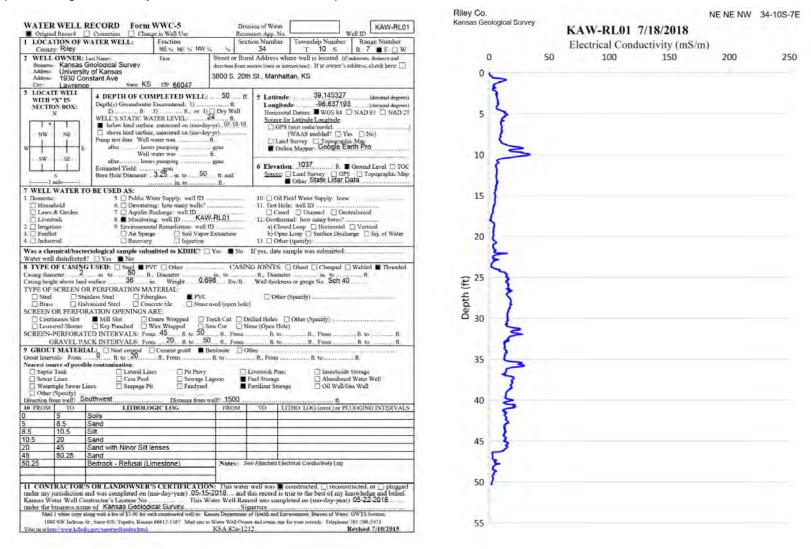
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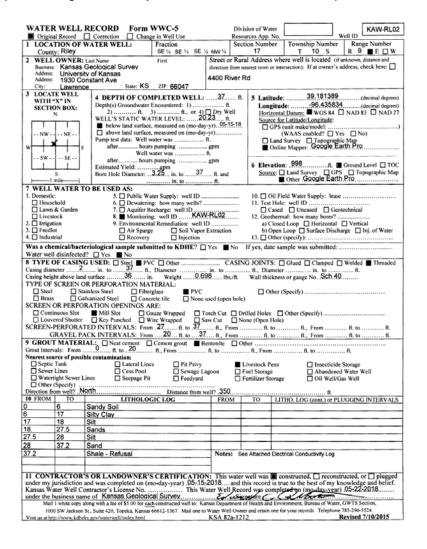
Appendix A- Kansas River Alluvial Aquifer Wells-Water Well Completion Records and Electrical Conductivity Profiles. 390843096381401, RL01

http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hydro/WWC5/E/10S7/522405.pdf

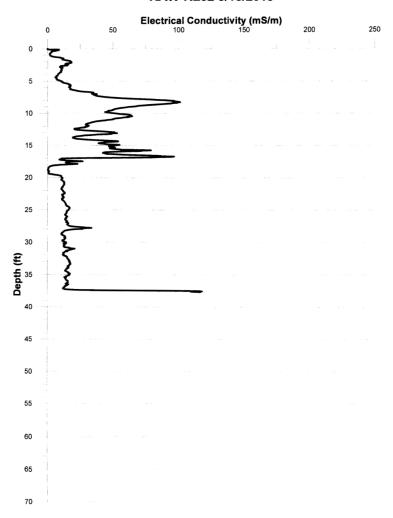


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http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hydro/WWC5/E/10S9/515527.pdf



KAW-RL02 5/15/2018

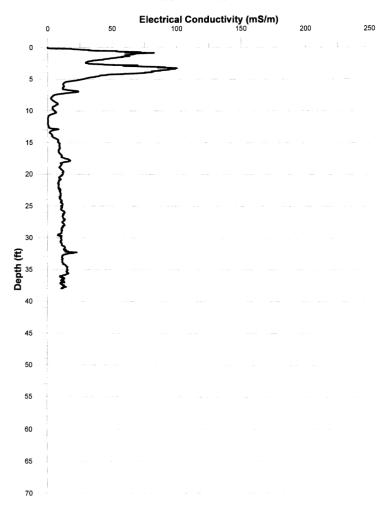


391027096165701, WB01

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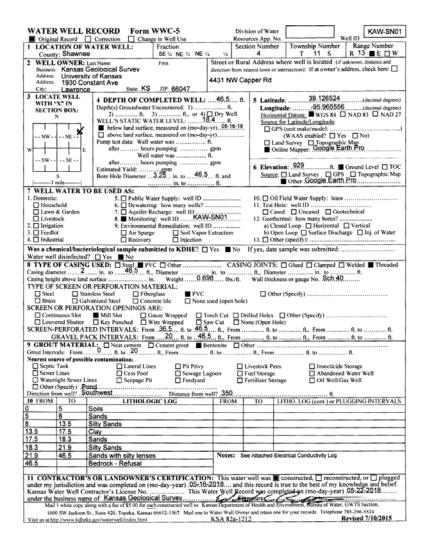


KAW-WB01 5/10/2018

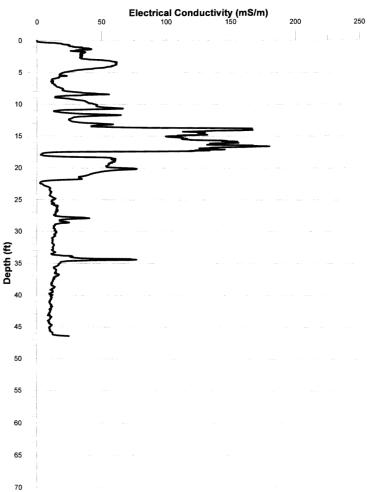


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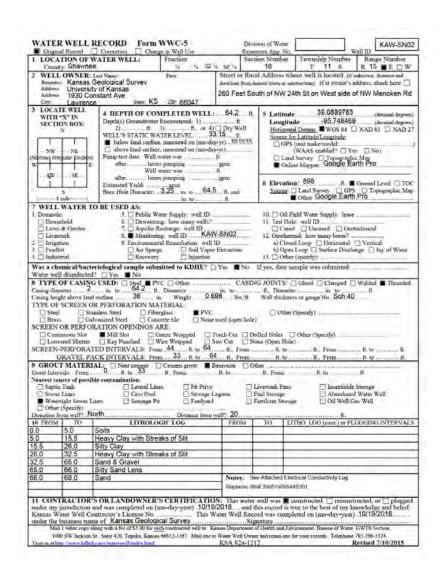


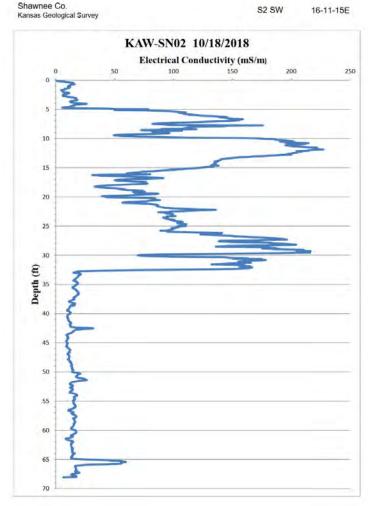
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390519095445302, SN02

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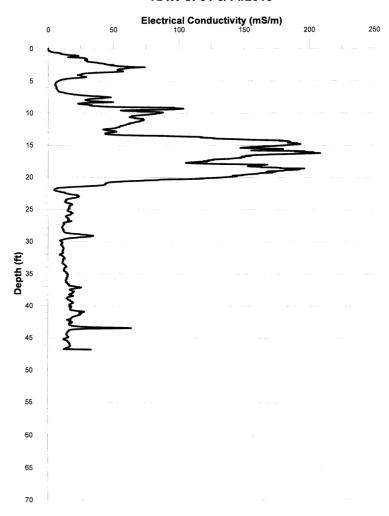


390418095310801, JF01

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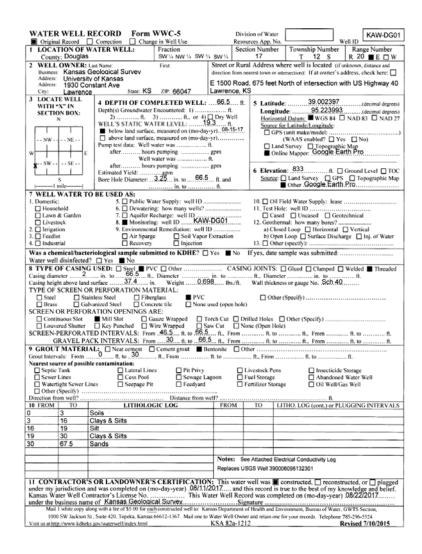


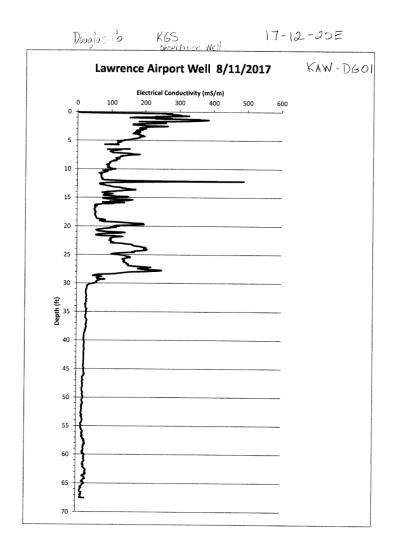
KAW-JF01 5/14/2018



390024095224001, DG01

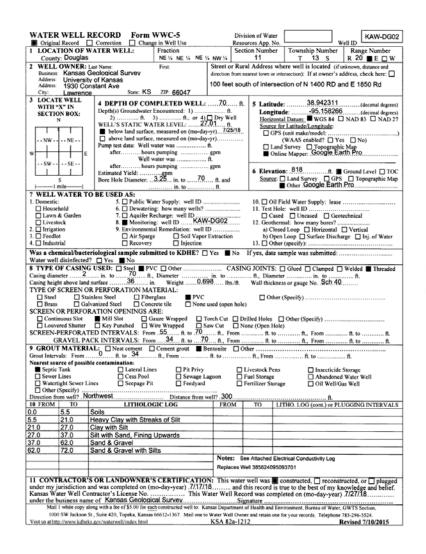
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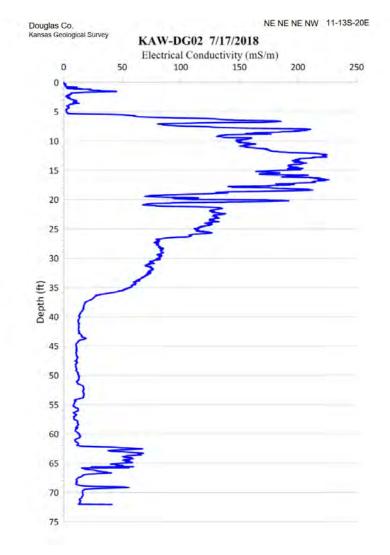




385624095093702, DG02

http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hydro/WWC5/E/13S20/522411.pdf





385908094574001, LV01

http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hydro/WWC5/E/12S22/515526.pdf



KAW-LV01 5/8/2018 Electrical Conductivity (mS/m) Depth 35

390332094455103, WY01

http://www.kgs.ku.edu/Hydro/WWC5/E/11S24/515530.pdf



KAW-WY01 5/9/2018

