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Use of electrical resistivity tomography in selection of sites for underground dams in a semiarid region in southeastern Brazil.

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Abstract

A number of geophysical investigations have been carried out over the least two years as part of a study for identifying suitable sites for underground dams in the semiarid region of south east Brazil. The results obtained in the Municipality of Jenipapo de Minas have allowed identification of basement structures beneath shallow soil cover of the intermittent stream Bolas. According to current interpretation of electrical resistivity profiles and pseudo sections obtained in inversion techniques this structure is characterized by a high-resistivity layer (more than 1200 Ω m) beneath a low-resistivity surface layer (less than 500 Ω m), at depths of 1 to 5 meters. The high-resistivity layer has been interpreted as the top parts of the highly impermeable metamorphic rocks of the basement rocks. The lowresistivity layer is composed mostly of sandy soil in the bed of the Bolas stream. Results of repeat resistivity surveys, carried out during dry and wet seasons, have allowed new insights into the appearances of subsurface channels. Such features are associated with episodes of subsurface flow of water infiltration into the soil layer, during periods of rainy season. It appears that geoelectric surveys may be employed in mapping spatial and temporal characteristics of subsurface water flows, associated with infiltration episodes of meteoric waters into subsoil layers

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