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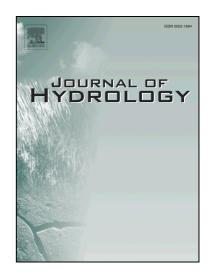
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HYDRAULICS OF EPIPHREATIC FLOW OF A KARST AQUIFER

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ABSTRACT

The nature of epiphreatic flow remains an important research challenge in karst hydrology. This study

focuses on the flood propagation along the epiphreatic system of Reka-Timavo system (Kras/Carso Plateau,

Slovenia/Italy). It is based on long-term monitoring of basic physical parameters (pressure/level,

temperature, specific electric conductivity) of ground water in six active caves belonging to the flow

system. The system vigorously responds to flood events, with stage rising more than 100 m in some of the

caves. Besides presenting the response of the system to flood events of different scales, the work focuses

on the interpretation of recorded hydrographs in view of the known distribution and size of conduits and

basic hydraulic relations. Furthermore, the hydrographs were used to infer the unknown geometry

between the observation points. This way, the main flow restrictors, overflow passages and large

epiphreatic storages were identified. The assumptions were tested with a hydraulic model, where the

inversion procedure was used for an additional parameter optimisation. Time series of temperature and

specific electric conductivity were used to assess the apparent velocities of flow between consecutive

points.

Key words: karst, groundwater dynamics, epiphreatic flow, observation network, modelling, Kras/Carso.

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