



Dock on Crooked Lake in central Florida in the 1970's.



The same dock in 1990.

As a result of very low topographic relief, high rainfall, and a karst terrain, the Florida landscape is characterized by numerous lakes and wetland areas. The underlying Floridan aquifer is one of the most extensive and productive aquifers in the world. Over the past two decades, lake levels declined and wetlands dried out in highly developed west-central Florida as a result of both extensive pumping and low precipitation during these years. Differentiating between the effects of the drought and pumping has been difficult. (Photographs courtesy of Florida Water Resources Journal, August, 1990 issue.)

The chemistry of ground water and the direction and magnitude of exchange with surface water significantly affect the input of dissolved chemicals to lakes. In fact, ground water can be the principal source of dissolved chemicals to a lake, even in cases where ground-water discharge is a

small component of a lake's water budget. Changes in flow patterns to lakes as a result of pumping may alter the natural fluxes to lakes of key constituents such as nutrients and dissolved oxygen, in turn altering lake biota, their environment, and the interaction of both.