



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Florida Geological Survey
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To Whom It May Concern,

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The Florida Geological Survey (FGS) is the technical/scientific arm of the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) which is the agency responsible for the conservation, protection and management of Florida's state natural resources. For several years the Hydrogeology group of the FGS has been conducting research in collaboration with professionals in the academic institutions and private sector organizations including Global Underwater Explorers (GUE). Objectives of this collaboration are multiple but included the following:

- Joint research activities and publications,
- Conducting and sponsoring seminars and scientific meetings,
- Exchange of scientific data, products and other information,
- Presentations at technical workshops, public events and meetings,
- Developing educational materials for dissemination to schools, citizen groups, government agencies and the public at large,
- Collaboration in the establishment and operation of a *hydrogeological observatory and an Environmental Science and Policy Center (ESPC)* in the Tallahassee, Florida area,
- Collaboration in efforts to generate stable funding to support the activities of both organizations.

Throughout this collaboration we found the GUE to be an outstanding organization of professionals who contributed freely of their time, expertise and resources to the projects we undertook together. Findings and recommendations stemming from this effort contributed not only to advancing our scientific knowledge of the dynamics of the natural systems under study but also to solving environmental problems facing our community. While these findings are of great significance to Florida's environmental conservation and protection efforts; they can also be extrapolated to similar systems elsewhere. Collaboration between the FGS and GUE bridged many perceived gaps between explorers and scientists to the benefit of conservation and protection of natural systems. In my capacity as a scientist who managed many of these projects; I have developed a great deal of admiration for the GUE and its

members with whom I hope to continue and foster current and future collaboration.
Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely

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