

**First announcement of an upcoming conference**

# **Karst, Groundwater Contamination, & Public Health: Moving Beyond Case Studies**

**January 2016 in San Juan, Puerto Rico**

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This Karst Waters Institute conference will bring together karst and public health scientists, regulators, and community groups to consider overlapping topics of concern. Public health issues for karst aquifers stem from the ease of introducing contaminants, the ubiquity of karst terrains worldwide, and pervasive use of karst groundwater for human consumption. The primary objective of the conference is to develop a systematic framework to address public health concerns arising from contaminant transport in karst groundwater.

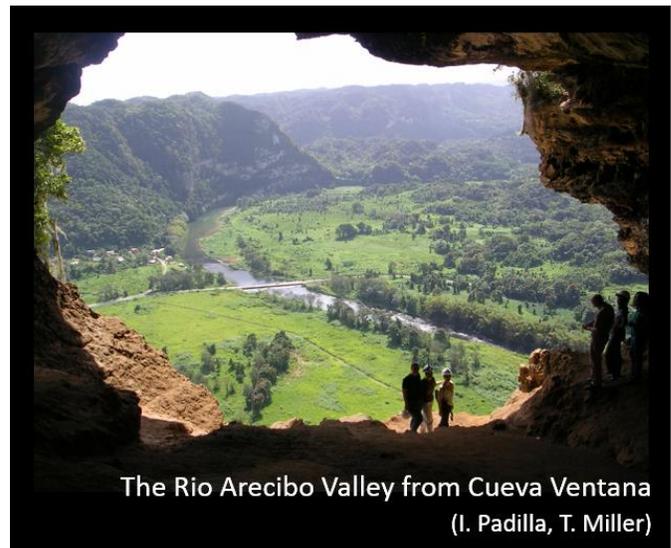
Specific aims for the meeting:

- (1) bring together experts from both fields for cross-fertilization;
- (2) develop a conceptual framework for how contaminants are transported in karst; and
- (3) identify particular adverse public-health outcomes and prevention strategies resulting from acute and long-term exposure relating to contaminated karst groundwater.

## **MAIN TOPICS & KEYNOTE SPEAKERS**

The meeting will include a combination of invited and volunteered talks. Speakers and topics to include the following:

- The karst of Puerto Rico (keynote address by Dr. Tom Miller, UPRM Geology)
- Public health issues in the karst of Puerto Rico (Dr. Jose Cordero, Director of the Institute of Genomics and Public Health, UPR)
- The current state of knowledge regarding contaminants in karst (led by Dr. William White, Penn. State Univ.)
- Tools for investigating contaminant transport
- Specific contaminants and their remediation
- Assessing exposure concentrations and human health risk
- Karst-related health issues
- Regulatory framework for investigating and preventing exposure (keynote speaker Geary Schindel, Edwards Aquifer Authority)
- Poster sessions and 5-minute “snap talks” each evening provide an opportunity for all attendees to share information on current research.



The Rio Arecibo Valley from Cueva Ventana  
(I. Padilla, T. Miller)

## VENUE & FIELD TRIPS

The meeting will be held in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Two field trips will take advantage of the spectacular karst geology and ongoing karst research related to public-health issues.

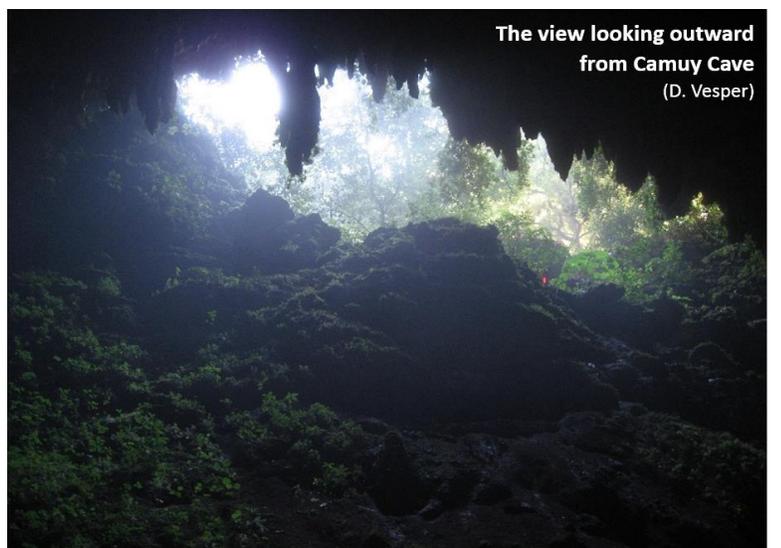
A mid-meeting field trip will visit the San Juan Bay Estuary Program to see the integration of public health, water contamination, community involvement, and education/outreach in action. An optional two-day field trip will take place at the end of the meeting to allow participants to see the karst of Puerto Rico's north coast and mountains.

## ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

Dr. Dorothy Vesper (West Virginia Univ.)  
Dr. Ellen Herman (Bucknell Univ.)  
Dr. William White (Penn State Univ.)  
Mr. William Jones (Karst Waters Institute)  
Dr. Janet Herman (Univ. of Virginia)  
Dr. Ingrid Padilla (Univ. PR Mayagüez)  
Dr. Tom Miller (Univ. PR Mayagüez)  
Dr. Sarah Carmichael (App. State Univ.)  
Dr. John Meeker (Univ. Michigan)  
Dr. Marian Rutigliano (U.S. Environmental Protection Agency)

## SPONSORS

The conference is co-sponsored by Karst Waters Institute and the Puerto Rico Test Site for Exploring Contamination Threats (PROTECT) project of the Superfund Research Program (SRP) of the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).



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To learn more about this meeting and to get regular updates, visit us at  
<http://karstwaters.org/conferences/kgcph/>  
or email us at [publichealth@karstwaters.org](mailto:publichealth@karstwaters.org)