

Geology and Ground-water Resources of the Upper Niobrara River Basin, Nebraska and Wyoming.

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Geology and Ground- Water Resources of the River Basin, Nebraska and Wyoming

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Abstract

The upper Niobrara River drainage basin comprises about 6,600 square miles of northwestern Nebraska and east-central Wyoming. The western rolling plains broken on either side of the Niobrara River by its tributary streams; the eastern half is in the Sand Hills region of Nebraska.

Rocks ranging in age from Precambrian to Quaternary are exposed in this report. The pre-Tertiary rocks crop out only in a small area and are not important as a source of water. Most of the area is underlain to depth by the Chadron and Brule formations of Tertiary age, both of which crop out. These rocks are not penetrated by wells because large quantities of water are available from shallower formations.

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The Arikaree group and Ogallala formation, both of Tertiary age, consist of sand and sandstone, silt, and locally of many layers of limy concretion. They are the principal aquifers, but they are only moderately permeable. Water must penetrate 150 to 200 feet into the zone of saturation to obtain a yield of 100 gallons per minute.

Dune sand, alluvium, and terrace deposits of Quaternary age consist of permeable sediments, but the zone of saturation in these deposits is shallow. They yield large quantities of water; therefore, large-discharge wells can be drilled in underlying Tertiary rocks.



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