

1st Draft Recess Marbles GWB Description –August 2004

Recess Marbles GWB: Summary of Initial Characterisation.

Hydrometric Area Local Authority	Associated surface water features	Associated terrestrial ecosystem(s)	Area (km ²)
Hydrometric Area 31 Galway Co. Co.	Rivers: Screeb, Recess, Owentooy, Tooreenacoona, Cahar. Lakes: Ardderry, Athry, Ballinfad, Ballynahinch, Derryclare, Derryneen, Gorroman, Killeen, Chluain Toipin, Loch na Cuige Rua, Agaddy, Avonmore, Derryhallagh, Fadda, Nabrucka, Shindilla, Park, Loughyanaghoin, Loughyvangan, Lurgan, Oorid, Woody.	Connemara Bog Complex (002034) (O’Riain, 2004).	26
Topography	<p>This is an elongated GWB orientated approximately E-W, approximately 25 km long and up to 2 km wide. It occupies a low lying area in which the marble rock units are located, and marks the boundary between Connemara’s mountainous and boggy lowlands. The main Clifden-Recess-Maam Cross road is positioned along the line of the GWB. Elevations range from 30-50 mAOD. Precambrian quartzites, gneisses and schists form the boundaries to the north and south. Surface water catchment divides bound the GWB to the east and west. Rivers and streams flow into the GWB from the north and flow along the GWB between an elongated series of lakes before flowing south to the sea. Figure 1 shows the location and boundaries of the GWB.</p>		
Geology and Aquifers	Aquifer categories	<p>This is an independent GWB because it comprises Precambrian Marbles, which are hydrochemically different from the Precambrian quartzites, gneisses and schists. PI: Poor aquifer which is generally unproductive except for local zones.</p>	
	Main aquifer lithologies	The GWB is composed of Precambrian Marbles (Lakes Marbles Formation).	
	Key structures	<p>The key structural trend is E-W, parallel to the northern and southern boundaries of the GWB. Closely spaced faults trending NE-SW cross the GWB, every 100-1500 m. Bedding and foliation dip steeply to the south. A tectonic slide forms the southern boundary of the GWB.</p>	
	Key properties	<p>There are no data available for this GWB. One ‘Poor’ yielding well (yield of 22 m³/d), with a productivity index of V and a specific capacity of approximately 2 m³/d/m is present in the adjoining Clifden Marbles GWB. The data indicate low transmissivity. Precambrian Marbles in other parts of the country have variable transmissivities but in general are expected to be low. Transmissivity may be higher in the vicinity of fault zones. Storativity is expected to be low (<0.5%). The data are inadequate to calculate groundwater gradients, however, these are expected to be greater than 0.01. Karstification is reported in some marble units in Donegal, and it is possible that similar rock units in this GWB may be susceptible to this process.</p>	
	Thickness	<p>Most groundwater flux is expected to be in the uppermost part of the aquifer; comprising a broken and weathered zone typically less than 3 m thick; a zone of interconnected fissuring 10-15 m thick; and a zone of isolated poorly connected fissuring typically less than 150 m.</p>	
Overlying Strata	Lithologies	The subsoils are dominated by blanket peat.	
	Thickness	The thickness of the blanket peat ranges from 0-6 m, depending on topography (Daly, 1985).	
	% area aquifer near surface	<i>[Further Information to be added at a later date]</i>	
	Vulnerability	<i>[Further Information to be added at a later date]</i>	
Recharge	Main recharge mechanisms	<p>Diffuse recharge occurs via rainfall percolating through the subsoil and rock outcrops. Due to the low permeability of some subsoil deposits and the aquifers, a high proportion of the effective rainfall will quickly discharge to the streams. The stream density is relatively high, reflecting the high proportion of surface runoff.</p>	
	Est. recharge rates	<i>[Information will be added at a later date]</i>	
Discharge	Large springs and high yielding wells (m³/d)	<p>Sources: None identified. Excellent Wells: None identified. Good Wells: None identified. Springs: None identified.</p>	
	Main discharge mechanisms	<p>Shallow groundwater is likely to discharge to streams and lakes, but the limited bedrock transmissivity means that the baseflow component of the total streamflow will be low. Small springs and seeps are likely to issue at the stream heads and along their course.</p>	

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	Hydrochemical Signature	<p>No available data within this particular GWB.</p> <p>National classification: Precambrian Marbles Calcareous. Generally CaHCO₃ signature. Alkalinity (mg/l as CaCO₃): range of 112-428; mean of 274 (22 data points) Total Hardness (mg/l): range of 180-436; mean of 311 (22 data points) Conductivity (μS/cm): range of 414-814; mean of 667 (22 data points)</p>
	Groundwater Flow Paths	<p>In the absence of inter-granular permeability, groundwater flow is expected to be concentrated in upper fractured and weathered zones and in the vicinity of fault zones, which may have some degree of karstification. Flow paths are likely to be up to 150 m with groundwater discharging rapidly to nearby streams and small springs. Flow directions are expected to be in general to the south, toward the coast.</p>
	Groundwater & Surface water interactions	<p>Groundwater will discharge locally to streams and rivers crossing the aquifer and also to small springs and seeps. Owing to the poor productivity of the aquifers in this body it is unlikely that any major groundwater - surface water interactions occur. Baseflow to rivers and streams is likely to be relatively low.</p>
Conceptual model		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is an elongated GWB orientated approximately E-W, approximately 25 km long and up to 2 km wide. The GWB occupies a low lying area in which the marble rock units are located, and marks the boundary between Connemara's mountainous and boggy lowlands. Elevations range from 30-50 mAOD. • Precambrian quartzites, gneisses and schists form the boundaries to the north and south. Surface water catchment divides bound the GWB to the east and west. Rivers and streams flow into the GWB from the north and flow along the GWB between an elongated series of lakes before flowing south to the sea. • The GWB is composed primarily of low transmissivity rocks, although there may be more productive zones in the vicinity of faults. Most of the groundwater flux is likely to be in the uppermost part of the aquifer. • Recharge occurs diffusely through the subsoil and rock outcrops, although is limited by low permeability subsoil and bedrock. Therefore, most of the effective rainfall is not expected to recharge the aquifer. • Flow paths are likely to be up to 150 m with groundwater discharging rapidly to the streams crossing the aquifer, and to small springs and seeps. Overall, the flow directions are expected to be to the south, as determined by the topography. • The rock units in GWB are generally of low permeability and baseflow to rivers and streams is likely to be relatively low.
Attachments		<p>Figure 1.</p>
Instrumentation		<p>Stream gauges: None EPA Water Level Monitoring boreholes: None EPA Representative Monitoring points: None</p>
Information Sources		<p>Daly, D. (1985) <i>Groundwater in County Galway with particular reference to its Protection from Pollution</i>. Geological Survey of Ireland report for Galway County Council. 98pp. Aquifer Chapters: The Granite, Ordovician, Precambrian and Ordovician Aquifers. Faulkner, T. (2000) <i>Caves in Metamorphic Limestones of the Irish Dalradian Supergroup</i>. Limestone Research Group, Department of Geographical Sciences, University of Huddersfield, Queensgate, Huddersfield, HD1 3DH, UK. From Irish Speleology 17, 2000, pp43-49. Long, C.B. and McConnell (1995) <i>Geology of Connemara: A geological description, to accompany bedrock geology 1:100,000 scale map, Sheet 10, Connemara</i>. Geological Survey of Ireland. O' Riain, G., (2004). <i>Water Dependent Ecosystems and Subtypes Draft Report</i>. WFD Support Projects. Compass Informatics in association with National Wildlife and Parks Service (DEHLG).</p>
Disclaimer		<p>Note that all calculation and interpretations presented in this report represent estimations based on the information sources described above and established hydrogeological formulae.</p>

Figure 1 Location and boundaries of GWB

