



# Environmental Geology: An Earth System Science Approach

By Dorothy J. Merritts, Andrew De Wet, Kirsten Menking

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## **Editorial Review**

### **About the Author**

Kirsten Menking is an environmental Earth scientist in the Department of Earth Science and Geography at Vassar College, USA. Her research interests include using lake sediments to unravel Earth's history of climatic change, linking this history to atmospheric and hydrologic processes through a combination of numerical modeling experiments and collection of weather and stream discharge data, analyzing the evolution of landforms in response to climatic and tectonic processes, and studying the impacts of urbanization on streams. She has published journal articles documenting glacial-interglacial cycles in the Sierra Nevada mountains and adjacent Owens Valley of California, determined the climatic conditions necessary to produce a Pleistocene lake in the now-dry Estancia Basin of New Mexico, and uncovered a centuries long mid-Holocene drought in New York's Hudson River valley. Her current research involves quantifying the amount of road salt entering the groundwater system, a topic of concern both for people dependent on well water and for aquatic ecosystems. Dorothy Merritts is a geologist with expertise on streams, rivers, and the impact of humans and geologic hazards on landscape evolution. In the western United States, she conducted research on the San Andreas Fault of coastal California, and her international work focuses on fault movements in South Korea, Indonesia, Australia, and Costa Rica. Her primary research in the eastern United States is in the Appalachian Mountains and Piedmont, particularly in the mid-Atlantic region, where she is investigating the role of climate change and human activities in transforming the valley bottom landscapes and waterways of Eastern North America. Recently she partnered with other scientists and policy-makers from multiple state and national government agencies to develop and test a new approach to stream and wetland restoration. She is a professor in the Department of Earth and Environment at Franklin Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania. She is an author or co-author on more than 70 scientific articles, and the editor and contributing writer for numerous scientific books and field guides. Andrew de Wet is a classically trained geologist specializing in Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and remote sensing, and their application to environmental problems on Earth and geological processes on Mars. He holds an honors degree in geology from the University of Natal (now the University of Kwazulu-Natal), South Africa, and a doctorate from Cambridge University, England. He has done field work in South Africa, Greece, the United Kingdom, Mongolia, Chile, Antarctica and the United States. He teaches environmental geology, GIS and Natural Resources, and an interdisciplinary course on comparative planetology with a focus on Mars. He served as Director of the Keck Geology Consortium for three years and has led Keck Geology research projects numerous times. Professor de Wet's capacity for visualizing complex systems has clarified concepts and inspired students to better understand the interconnectedness of natural systems. Through his travels across seven continents he has acquired a deep knowledge of geological and environmental conditions, which he transcribes into dynamic graphics portraying natural and anthropomorphic processes. He has published articles on geological pedagogy in the *Journal of Geological Education* and on shared faculty positions in the *Journal of Women and Minorities in Science and Engineering and Geotimes*. He is a member of the Geological Society of America and the American Geophysical Union. He is involved in a long-standing collaboration with researchers at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center and publishes on environmental issues and planetary geology.

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