

James J. Butler, Jr.

Senior Scientist, [Geohydrology](#), Kansas Geological Survey

Kansas Geological Survey
1930 Constant Avenue
Lawrence, KS 66047-3724
Phone: (785) 864-2116
E-mail: jbutler@ku.edu
[ResearcherID](#) and [Google Scholar](#)

Education

- B.S. (Geology), College of William and Mary, 1978
- M.S. (Applied Hydrogeology), Stanford University, 1982
- Ph.D. (Applied Hydrogeology), Stanford University, 1987

Employment

- Geohydrology Section, Kansas Geological Survey, 1986-present
- Cox Visiting Professor, Dept. of Geophysics, Stanford University, April-June 2017.
- Visiting Researcher, Hydrogeology Group, Universitat Politècnica de València, Valencia, Spain, Sept-Dec. 2012, March-June 2022.
- Courtesy Faculty Member, Dept. of Geology, University of Kansas, 1988-present
- Visiting Scientist, Center of Applied Geoscience, University of Tuebingen, Germany, June-Aug. 2003
- Visiting Scientist, Sandia National Laboratory, Jan.-June 1995

Interests and Expertise

- The future of aquifers supporting irrigated agriculture
- Well hydraulics
- Direct-push methods for hydrostratigraphic characterization
- Stream-aquifer interactions
- Phreatophytes

Selected Professional Activities and Awards

- M. King Hubbert Award, National Ground Water Association (2020)

- President, International Commission on Ground Water, International Association of Hydrological Sciences (IAHS), 2013-2014
- Elected Member, Board of Directors, Scientists and Engineers Division, National Ground Water Association, 2010-2013
- Pioneers in Groundwater Award, American Society of Civil Engineers--Environmental and Water Resources Institute (2009).
- 2008 Editors' Citation for Excellence in Refereeing for Water Resources Research
- 2007 Henry Darcy Distinguished Lecturer, National Ground Water Association.
- Member, Groundwater Committee, American Geophysical Union, 1994-2009 (Chair 2004-2006).
- Associate Editor, Hydrological Sciences Journal, Aug. 2011-Aug. 2012
- Associate Editor, Hydrogeology Journal, April 2006-Dec. 2009
- Associate Editor, Ground Water, Jan. 2002-Dec. 2017
- Associate Editor, Journal of Hydrology, Jan. 2000-Dec. 2005
- Associate Editor, Water Resources Research, Oct. 1995-Dec. 2001

Selected Recent Presentations

- Butler, J.J., Jr., Testimony to the Kansas House Committee on Water, Topeka, KS, Jan. 19, 2023 (video at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f7m987t0ARM> beginning at 69 minutes).
- Butler, J.J., Jr., Invited panelist presentation, Groundwater Recharge and Flow Workshop, National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, Washington, D.C., July 27, 2019 (video at <https://youtu.be/uLs6unlxCNw>).
- Butler, J.J., Jr., The High Plains aquifer in Kansas: Current status and future prospects, Science on Screen, Salina Arts Center Cinema, Salina, KS, April 1, 2019 (video at <https://youtu.be/jVvFxiw0rfE>).

Selected Recent Publications

- Long, D., Y. Xu, Y. Cui, Y. Cui, **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, ... and B.R. Scanlon (21 authors), Unprecedented large-scale aquifer recovery through human intervention, Nature Communications, 16, 7296, doi: 10.1038/s41467-025-62719-5, 2025 [[available online](#)].
- Orduña-Alegría, M.E., S. Zipper, ... and **J.J. Butler, Jr.** (19 authors), Unlocking aquifer sustainability through irrigator-driven groundwater conservation, Nature Sustainability, doi: 10.1038/s41893-024-01437-0, 2024 [[available online](#)].

- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, and C.K. Johnson, Groundwater depletion: A global challenge for intergenerational equity, *Interpretation*, v. 78, no. 1, doi: 10.1177/00209643231201998, 2024 (invited – [available online](#)).
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, and D.O. Whittemore, Groundwater depletion reduces drought resiliency, *Nature Water*, v. 2, pp. 10-11, doi: 10.1038/s44221-023-00185-3, 2024 (invited – [available online](#)).
- Whittemore, D.O., **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, G.C. Bohling, and B.B. Wilson, Are we saving water? Simple methods for assessing the effectiveness of groundwater conservation measures, *Agricultural Water Management*, 287, 108408, doi: 10.1016/j.agwat.2023.108408, 2023 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, G.C. Bohling, S.P. Perkins, D.O. Whittemore, G. Liu, and B.B. Wilson, Net inflow: An important target on the path to aquifer sustainability, *Groundwater*, v. 61, no. 1, doi: 10.1111/gwat.13233, 2023 [[available online](#)].
- Marston, L.T., S. Zipper, S.M. Smith, J.J. Allen, **J.J. Butler**, S. Gautam, and D.J. Yu, The importance of fit in groundwater self-governance, *Environ. Res. Lett.*, 17, 111001, doi: 10.1088/1748-9326/ac9a5e, 2022 [[available online](#)].
- Yang, W., D. Long, B.R. Scanlon, B. Burek, C. Zhang, Z. Han, **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, Y. Pan, X. Lei, and Y. Wada, Human intervention will stabilize groundwater storage across the North China Plain, *Water Resour. Res.*, v. 58, no. 2, doi: 10.1029/2021WR030884, 2022 [[available online](#)].
- Liu, G., B.B. Wilson, G.C. Bohling, D.O. Whittemore, and **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, Estimation of specific yield for regional groundwater models: Pitfalls, ramifications, and a promising path forward, *Water Resour. Res.*, v. 58, no. 1, doi: 10.1029/2021WR030761, 2022 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, J.J. Gomez-Hernandez, D. Perrone, and D. Hyndman, Introduction to special section: The quest for sustainability of heavily stressed aquifers at regional to global scales, *Water Resour. Res.*, v. 57, no. 8, doi: 10.1029/2021WR030446, 2021 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, S. Knobbe, E.C. Reboulet, D.O. Whittemore, B.B. Wilson, and G.C. Bohling, Water well hydrographs: An underutilized resource for characterizing subsurface conditions, *Groundwater*, v. 59, no. 6, 808-818, doi: 10.1111/gwat.13119, 2021 [[available online](#)].
- Bohling, G.C., **J.J. Butler Jr.**, D.O. Whittemore, and B. B. Wilson, Evaluation of data needs for assessments of aquifers supporting irrigated agriculture, *Water Resour. Res.*, v. 57, no. 4, doi: 10.1029/2020WR028320, 2021 [[available online](#)].
- Deines, J.M., A.D. Kendall, **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, B. Basso, and D.W. Hyndman, Combining remote sensing and crop models to assess the sustainability of stakeholder-driven groundwater management in the US High Plains Aquifer,

Water Resour. Res., v. 57, no. 3, doi: 10.1029/ 2020WR027756, 2021
[[available online](#)].

- Majumdar, S., R. Smith, **J.J. Butler Jr.**, V. Lakshmi, Groundwater withdrawal prediction using integrated multi-temporal remote sensing datasets and machine learning, Water Resour. Res., v. 56, no. 11, doi: 10.1029/2020WR028059, 2020 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, G.C. Bohling, D.O. Whittemore, and B.B. Wilson, Charting pathways towards sustainability for aquifers supporting irrigated agriculture, Water Resour. Res., v. 56, no. 10, doi: 10.1029/2020WR027961, 2020 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, G.C. Bohling, D.O. Whittemore, and B.B. Wilson, A roadblock on the path to aquifer sustainability: Underestimating the impact of pumping reductions, Environ. Res. Lett., 15, 014003, doi:10.1088/1748-9326/ab6002, 2020 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, The Design, Performance, and Analysis of Slug Tests (2nd edition), CRC Press, Boca Raton, 266 pp., 2019. [[Front Material and Introduction](#)] [[Online Info](#)] [[Errata](#)] [[Data for all examples](#)]
- Deines, J.M., A.D. Kendall, **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, and D.W. Hyndman, Quantifying irrigation adaptation strategies in response to stakeholder-driven groundwater management in the US High Plains Aquifer, Environ. Res. Lett., 14, 044014, doi:10.1088/1748-9326/aafe39, 2019 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, D.O. Whittemore, B.B. Wilson, and G.C. Bohling, Sustainability of aquifers supporting irrigated agriculture: A case study of the High Plains aquifer in Kansas, Water International, v. 43, no. 6, pp. 815-828, doi: 10.1080/02508060.2018.1515566, 2018 [[available online](#)].
- Griggs, B.W., and **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, Groundwater in the American West: How to harness hydrogeological analysis to improve groundwater management; *in*, The Water Problem: Climate Change and Water Policy in the United States, edited by P. Mulroy, Brookings Institution Press, 113-144, 2017.
- Bohling, G.C., G. Liu, P. Dietrich, and **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, Reassessing the MADE direct-push hydraulic conductivity data using a revised calibration procedure, Water Resour. Res., v. 52, no. 11, pp. 8790-8985, doi: 10.1002/2016WR019008, 2016 [[available online](#)].
- **Butler, J.J., Jr.**, D.O. Whittemore, B.B. Wilson, and G.C. Bohling, A new approach for assessing the future of aquifers supporting irrigated agriculture, Geophys. Res. Lett., v. 43, no. 5, pp. 2004-2010, doi:10.1002/2016GL067879, 20162020 [[available online](#)].
- Whittemore, D.O., **J.J. Butler, Jr.**, and B.B. Wilson, Assessing the major drivers of water-level declines: New insights into the future of heavily stressed aquifers, Hydrological Sciences Journal, v. 61, no. 1, pp. 134-145, doi:10.1080/02626667.2014.959958, 2016 [[available online](#)].