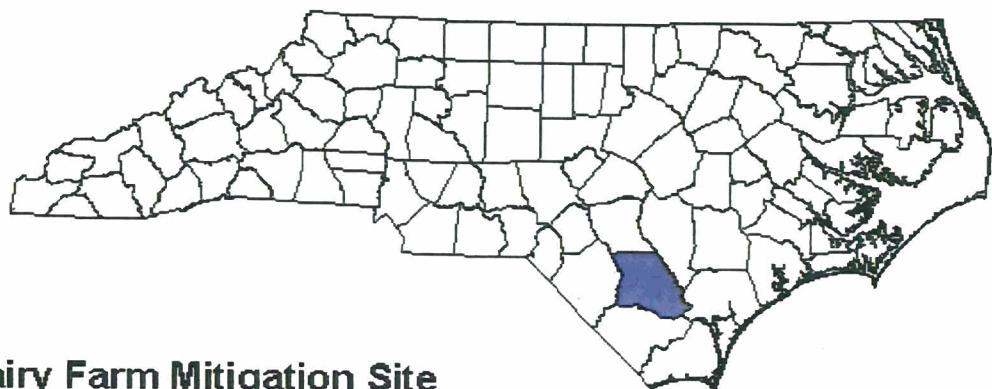


ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1999



Dowd Dairy Farm Mitigation Site
Bladen County
Project No. 8.1241802
TIP No. R-2204 WM



Prepared By:
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North Carolina Department of Transportation
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SUMMARY

The following report summarizes the monitoring activities that have occurred in the past year at the Dowd Dairy Farm Mitigation Site. Phase 1 of this site was constructed in 1998. Monitoring activities in 1999 represent the first year of monitoring following construction. The site must demonstrate hydrologic and vegetation success for a minimum of five years or until the project is deemed successful.

The site contains thirty-one groundwater monitoring wells and 32 vegetation plots.

One major change in the hydrologic monitoring process is the use of local weather station rainfall data for the site analysis. The daily rainfall on the well data graphs is recorded at a rain gauge at the William O. Huske location (Bladen County), maintained by the NC State Climate Office. This data is being used because past on-site rainfall gauges have proven unreliable. These site gauges will be replaced with more reliable equipment prior to the start of the 2000 growing season.

Hydrologic monitoring indicated that the site is performing poorly. For 1999 under normal conditions, one of 31 wells met jurisdictional hydrologic success of at least 12.5% of the growing season, while thirteen wells met success below 5% of the season. Conditions of hydrologic monitoring did improve considerably due to several hurricanes beginning in September of this year, with twenty-three of the wells meeting success of at least 12.5% of the season. Vegetation monitoring yielded a successful stem count in all of the planting transects; the average density was 550, well above the requirement of 320 trees per acre.

While the results under "normal conditions" are not considered favorable, it must be taken into account that Phase 2 construction (filling of the central canal) will play a critical role in raising the water table on the site.

Based on the monitoring results from the 1999 growing season, NCDOT recommends that hydrologic and vegetation monitoring continue.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Description

The Dowd Dairy Farm Wetland Mitigation Site is located 7 miles north of Elizabethtown and 2 miles east of White Oak in Bladen County (Figure 1). It is bounded by SR 1324 (Dowd Dairy Farm Road) to the north, SR 1332 (Oak Grove Church Road) to the west, and dense forest to the south and east. The site represents a Coastal Plain interstream divide converted for agricultural use. The site receives drainage from elevated sandy terraces and discharges into Ellis Creek and Panther Branch, tributaries of the Cape Fear River.

The site encompasses approximately 658 acres and is designed as a mitigation site for the Cape Fear River Basin. So far, the site is targeted to provide mitigation for two TIP Projects, R-2238 (USACE Action ID No. 199302820) and R-2562AA/AB (USACE Action ID No. 199304806).

1.2 Purpose

In order to demonstrate successful mitigation, hydrologic and vegetative monitoring must be conducted for a minimum of five years or until success criteria are fulfilled. Success criteria are based on federal guidelines for wetland mitigation. These guidelines stipulate criteria for both hydrologic conditions and vegetation survival. The following report details the results of hydrologic and vegetative monitoring during 1999 at the Dowd Dairy Farm Mitigation Site.

1.3 Project History

Summer 1998	Construction – Phase 1
Spring 1999	Tree Planting – Phase 1
February – April 1999	Installation of Monitoring Wells
July 1999	Construction begins – Phase 2
November 1999	Vegetation Monitoring (1 yr.)

Phase 1 construction consisted of clearing, grubbing, ripping, filling lateral ditches, and adding ditch plugs. Phase 2 construction will consist of filling in the central canal. Construction was originally to be completed by early 2000. However, due to the saturated conditions from the hurricane activity this fall, construction has been delayed. The new anticipated completion date is July 2000.

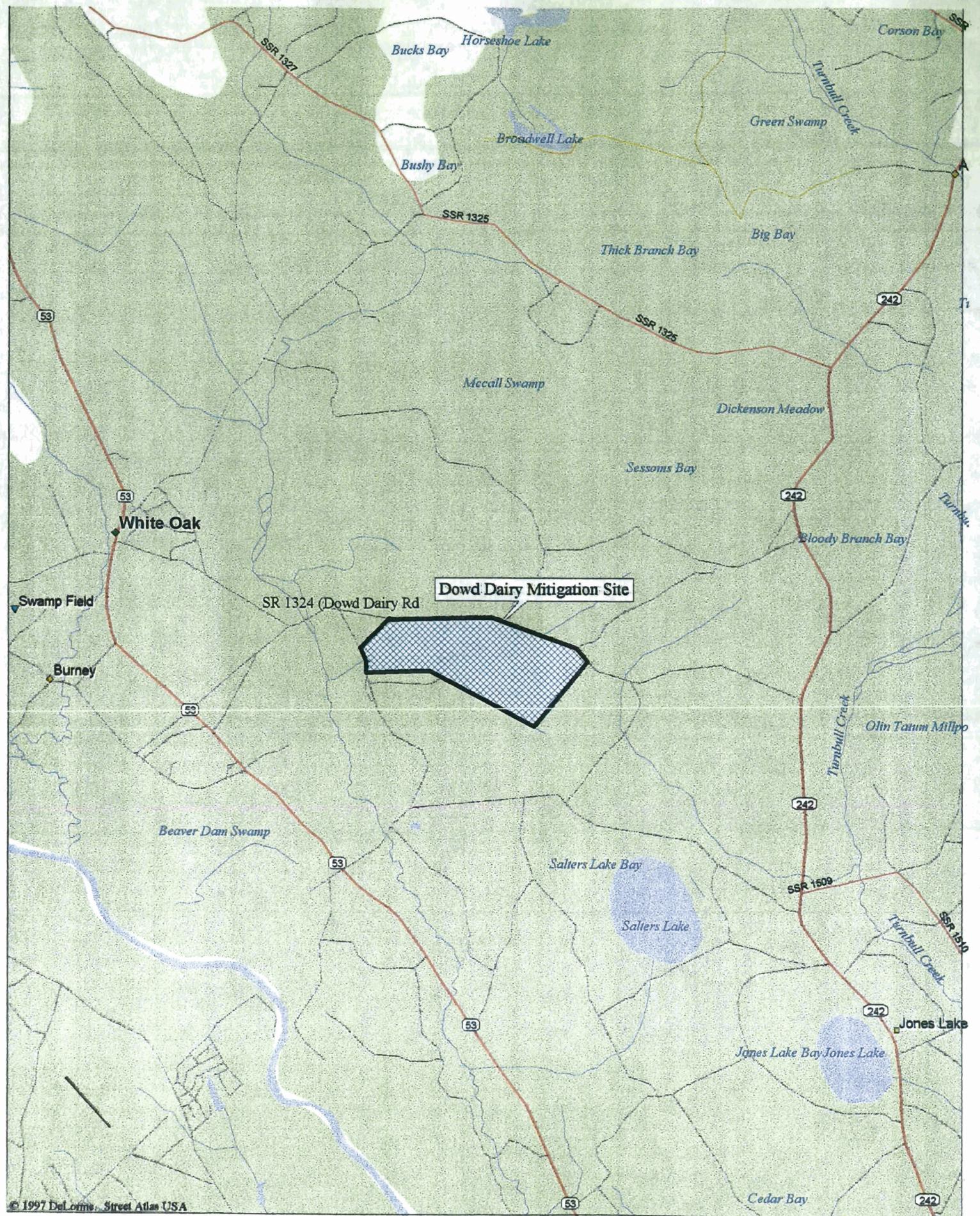


FIGURE 1
SITE LOCATION MAP

2.0 HYDROLOGY

2.1 Success Criteria

In accordance with federal guidelines for wetland mitigation, the success criteria for hydrology states that the area must be inundated or saturated (within 12" of the surface) by surface or ground water for at least 12.5% of the growing season. Areas inundated less than 5% of the growing season are always classified as non-wetlands. Areas inundated between 5% - 12.5% of the growing season can be classified as wetlands depending upon other factors, such as the presence of hydrophytic vegetation and hydric soils.

The growing season in Bladen County begins March 16 and ends November 14. The dates correspond to a 50% probability that temperatures will drop to 28° F or lower after March 16 and before November 14.¹ The growing season is 243 days; therefore the optimum duration for wetland hydrology is 31 days. Also, local climate must represent average conditions for the area.

2.2 Hydrologic Description

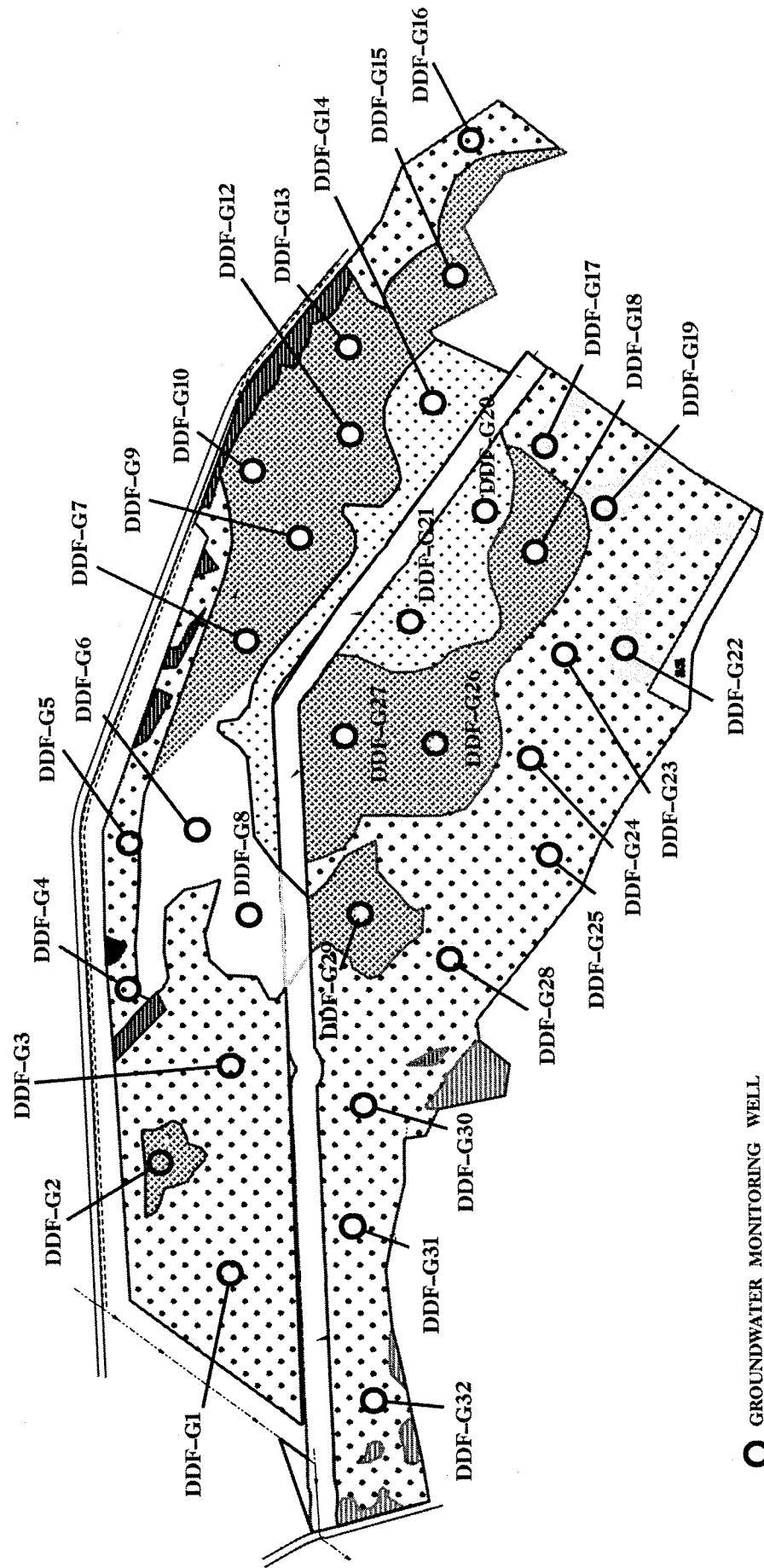
Historically, wetlands on the tract were created by a combination of radial groundwater and surface water flow from adjacent terraces as well as precipitation and vertical groundwater fluctuations maintained within the site. After an extensive study of the site's hydrology, it was concluded that blocking and filling the drainage ditches within the site would elevate the groundwater to a level that would saturate the soil stratum within the required twelve inches. It was predicted that this, in addition to surface water and runoff would be sufficient to restore wetland hydrology.

Thirty-one groundwater monitoring wells and two rain gauges were installed in 1999 (Figure 2). The rain gauges and monitoring wells recorded daily readings of rainfall and depth to groundwater, respectively.

Appendix A contains a plot of the groundwater depth for each monitoring well. Data determined to be erroneous was omitted; therefore, some gaps appear in the plots. Precipitation events are included on each graph as bars. The rainfall plotted is the daily rainfall recorded by a rain gauge located near the Bladen/Cumberland County line, rather than the onsite rain gauges. These onsite gauges will be replaced with more reliable equipment prior to the start of the 2000 growing season.

¹ Natural Resources Conversation Service, Soil Survey of Bladen County, North Carolina, p. 123.

**FIGURE 2: DOWD DAIRY FARM MITIGATION SITE
MONITORING WELL LOCATIONS**



2.3 Results of Hydrologic Monitoring

2.3.1 Site Data

The maximum number of consecutive days that the groundwater was within twelve inches of the surface was determined for each groundwater well. This number was converted into a percentage of the 243-day growing season. Tables 1A and 1B present the 1999 results.

Appendix A contains a plot of the groundwater depth for each monitoring well and the surface water depth recorded by the surface gauge. The maximum number of consecutive days is noted on each graph.

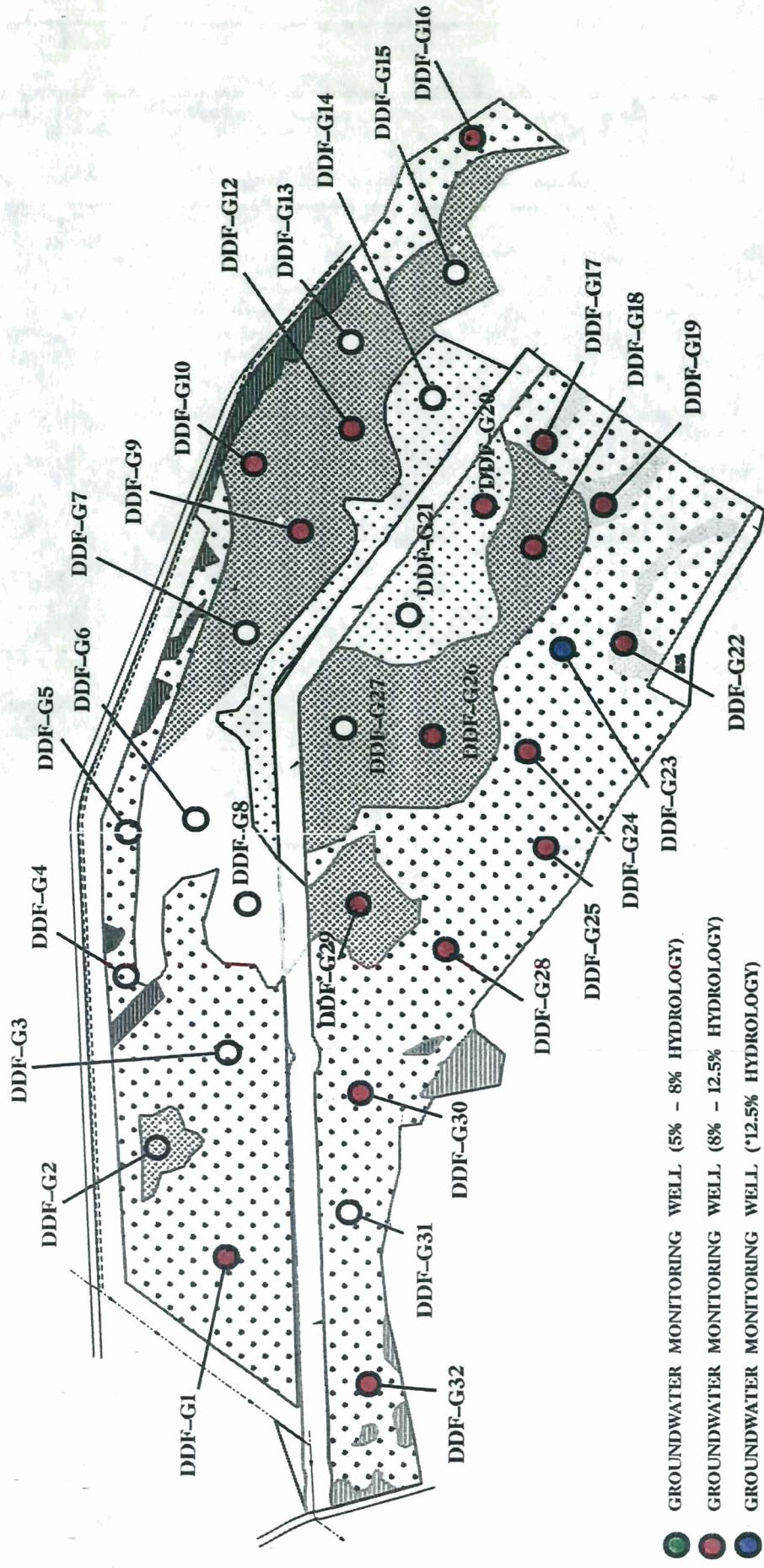
Several hurricanes inundated the site with precipitation beginning in September of this year. Because this additional precipitation was not considered "normal conditions" and greatly affected the monitoring results, the well data on this site was divided into two time periods: (1) conditions prior to hurricane activity, and (2) conditions during and after hurricane activity. Tables 1A and 1B reflect the two time periods.

Table 1A
1999 HYDROLOGIC MONITORING RESULTS –
CONDITIONS PRIOR TO HURRICANE ACTIVITY
(MARCH 16, 1999 – AUGUST 31, 1999)

Monitoring Well	< 5% (<12 dy)	5 - 8% (12-19 dy)	8 – 12.5% (20-30 dy)	> 12.5% (>31 dy)	Actual %	Dates Meeting Success
DDF-G1			✓		11.5	4/30 – 5/27
DDF-G2	✓				.8	5/2 – 5/3
DDF-G3	✓				2.1	5/1 – 5/5
DDF-G4	✓				.8	5/1 – 5/2
DDF-G5	✓				0	
DDF-G6	✓				0	
DDF-G7	✓				2.1	5/1 – 5/5
DDF-G8	✓				.4	5/2
DDF-G9			✓		9.1	4/30 – 5/21
DDF-G10			✓		11.9	3/16 – 4/13
DDF-G12			✓		11.5	3/16 – 4/12
DDF-G13	✓				.8	5/1 – 5/2
DDF-G14	✓				2.1	5/1 – 5/5
DDF-G15	✓				4.5	3/16 – 4/14
DDF-G16			✓		12.3	4/16 – 5/14
DDF-G17			✓		9.1	4/30 – 5/21
DDF-G18			✓		11.5	3/16 – 4/12
DDF-G19			✓		10.7	4/29 – 5/24
DDF-G20			✓		9.1	5/1 – 5/22
DDF-G21	✓				3.7	5/2 – 5/10
DDF-G22			✓		10.7	4/29 – 5/24
DDF-G23				✓	13.6	3/16 – 4/17
DDF-G24			✓		10.7	3/16 – 4/10
DDF-G25			✓		10.7	3/16 – 4/10
DDF-G26			✓		8.6	5/1 – 5/21
DDF-G27	✓				4.1	5/1 – 5/10
DDF-G28			✓		12.3	4/30 – 5/29
DDF-G29			✓		11.9	5/1 – 5/29
DDF-G30			✓		11.5	3/16 – 4/12
DDF-G31	✓				3.7	5/1 – 5/9
DDF-G32			✓		11.5	3/16 – 4/12

Figure 3A is a graphical representation of the hydrologic monitoring results for this earlier time period of 1999. A blue dot represents wetland hydrology for more than 12.5% of the season; a red dot indicates hydrology between 8% and 12.5%; a green dot represents hydrology between 5% and 8%.

**FIGURE 3A: DOWD DAIRY FARM MITIGATION SITE
1999 MONITORING RESULTS
CONDITIONS PRIOR TO HURRICANE ACTIVITY**



For this time period from March through August, only one of the thirty-two wells met jurisdictional hydrologic success of at least 12.5% during the growing season. Conversely, thirteen wells met hydrology of less than 5% of the growing season. A majority of the wells (17) fell between 8% and 12.5%.

Table 1B
1999 HYDROLOGIC MONITORING RESULTS –
CONDITIONS DURING AND AFTER HURRICANE ACTIVITY
(SEPTEMBER 1, 1999 – NOVEMBER 14, 1999)

Monitoring Well	< 5% (<12 dy)	5 - 8% (12-19 dy)	8 – 12.5% (20-30 dy)	> 12.5% (>31 dy)	Actual %	Dates Meeting Success
DDF-G1*				✓	12.8	9/1 – 10/1
DDF-G2*			✓		11.9	9/3 – 10/1
DDF-G3		✓			7.4	10/12 – 10/29
DDF-G4	✓				3.2	10/17 – 10/24
DDF-G5			✓		10.2	9/16 – 10/10
DDF-G6				✓	23.0	9/16 – 11/10
DDF-G7				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G8				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G9				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G10				✓	25.1	9/15 – 11/14
DDF-G12				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G13	✓				2.5	10/17 – 10/22
DDF-G14				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G15			✓		9.1	9/16 – 10/6
DDF-G16				✓	25.1	9/15 – 11/14
DDF-G17				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G18				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G19				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G20				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G21				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G22				✓	25.1	9/15 – 11/14
DDF-G23				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G24				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G25				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G26				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G27				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G28*		✓			7.4	10/28 – 11/14
DDF-G29				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G30*		✓			7.8	10/27 – 11/14
DDF-G31				✓	24.7	9/16 – 11/14
DDF-G32				✓	25.1	9/15 – 11/14

* Wells that stopped functioning prior October 26 were repaired on that day. Therefore, hurricane data is incomplete for this time period.

Figure 3B is a graphical representation of the hydrologic monitoring results for this later time period of 1999. As mentioned before, a blue dot represents wetland hydrology for more than 12.5% of the season; a red dot indicates hydrology between 8% and 12.5%; a green dot represents hydrology between 5% and 8%.

For this time period from September through November, twenty-three of the thirty-two wells met jurisdictional hydrologic success of at least 12.5% during the growing season. Conversely, two wells met hydrology of less than 5% of the growing season.

2.3.2 Climatic Data

Figure 4 is a comparison of 1999 monthly rainfall to historical precipitation for the area. The two lines represent the 30th and 70th percentiles of monthly precipitation for William O. Huske L&D, NC. The bars are monthly rainfall totals for 1999. The historical data was collected from the National Climatic Data Center while the recent rainfall was provided by the State Climate Office of North Carolina. Because of data availability, the 1999 rainfall encompasses precipitation through November. The 2000 annual monitoring report will include a 30-70 percentile graph with the monthly rainfall from December 1999.

The winter of 1999 on the site was visually quite wet. The precipitation data from January showed it to be much higher than the average for the area. However, February and March were drier than normal. The month of July was the driest month during the summer and was below the historic average. Finally, September experienced an unusually high precipitation due to several hurricanes.

2.4 Conclusions

For the Year 1999, only one of thirty-two monitoring wells indicated optimum hydrologic success of at least 12.5% from March through August, while thirteen wells were below 5%. From September through November, twenty-three of the wells optimum hydrologic success of at least 12.5%, while two wells were below 5%.

While the results under "normal conditions" are not considered favorable, it must be taken into account that Phase 2 construction (filling of the central canal) will play a critical role in raising the water table on the site.

**FIGURE 3B: DOWD DAIRY FARM MITIGATION SITE
1999 MONITORING RESULTS
CONDITIONS DURING AND AFTER HURRICANE ACTIVITY**

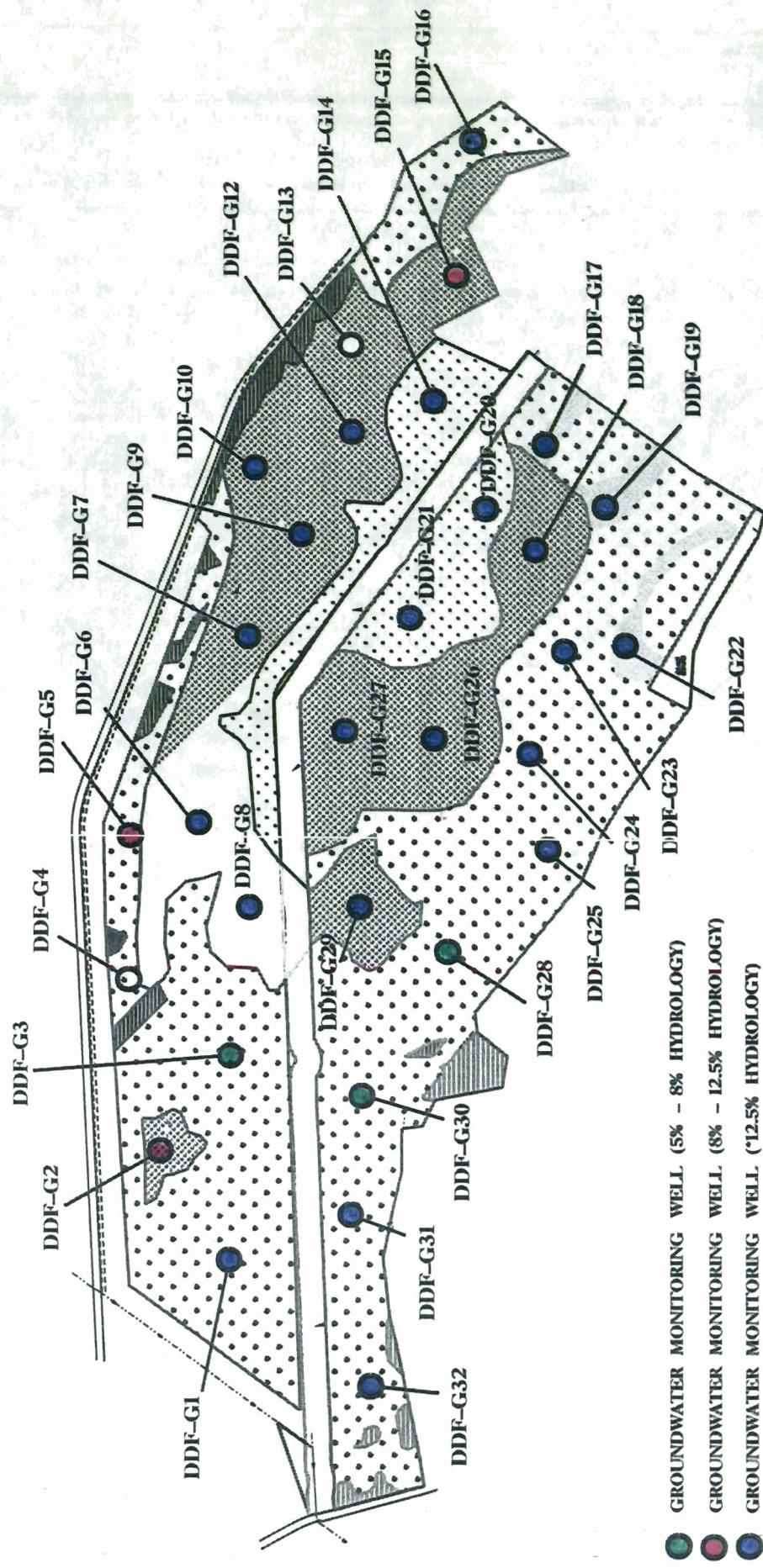
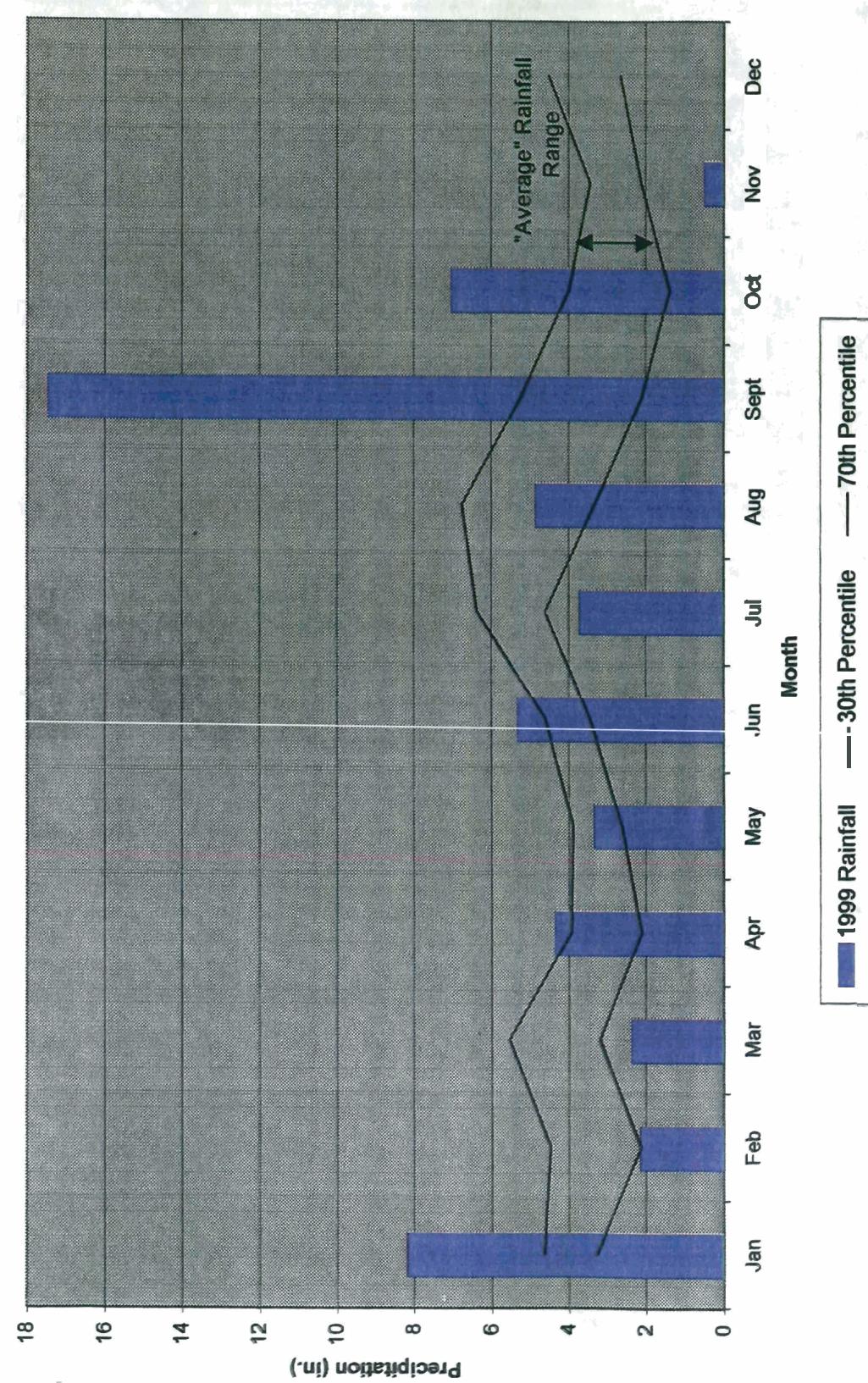


FIGURE 4: Dowd Dairy 30-70 Percentile Graph
Dare County



3.0 VEGETATION

3.1 Success Criteria

Success Criteria states that there must be a minimum of 320 trees per acre living for at least three consecutive years. A minimum of 5 character tree species must be present, with no more than 20% of any one species is also required with the exception of Atlantic White Cedar which may comprise up to 75% in swamp forest restoration. Loblolly Pine cannot comprise of more than 10% of the 320 trees per acre requirement.

3.2 Description of Species

The following tree species were planted in the Wetland Planting Areas:

Zone 1: Non-Riverine Wet Hardwood Forest (301.2 acres)

Quercus falcata var. *pagodaefolia*, Cherrybark Oak
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash
Quercus laurifolia, Laurel Oak
Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Nyssa aquatica, Water Tupelo
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak

Zone 2: Pine/Oak Hickory (17.8 acres)

Juglans nigra, Black Walnut
Nyssa sylvatica, Blackgum
Pinus palustris, Longleaf Pine
Quercus falcata, Southern Red Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Quercus alba, White Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Liriodendron tulipifera, Tulip Poplar

Zone 3: Non-Riverine Swamp Forest (189.4 acres)

Chamaecyparis thyoides, Atlantic White Cedar
Taxodium distichum, Bald Cypress
Quercus falcata var. *pagodaefolia*, Cherrybark Oak
Fraxinus pennsylvanica, Green Ash

Quercus laurifolia, Laurel Oak
Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak

Zone 4: Headwater (Slope) Swamp (12 acres)

Taxodium distichum, Bald Cypress
Quercus falcata var. *pagodaefolia*, Cherrybark Oak
Quercus laurifolia, Laurel Oak
Quercus lyrata, Overcup Oak
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Quercus nigra, Water Oak
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Liriodendron tulipifera, Tulip Poplar

Zone 5: Atlantic White Cedar Slope (55.24 acres)

Chamaecyparis thyoides, Atlantic White Cedar
Taxodium distichum, Bald Cypress
Pinus serotina, Pond Pine
Quercus michauxii, Swamp Chestnut Oak
Nyssa aquatica, Water Tupelo
Quercus phellos, Willow Oak
Liriodendron tulipifera, Tulip Poplar

3.3 Results of Vegetation Monitoring (1 yr.)

Table 2
VEGETATION MONITORING RESULTS- 1999

Table 2 continued

To determine tree density, 50' x 50' plots are installed immediately following planting. The actual numbers of planted trees that occur within the plot are counted. This number is equated to the number within each plot, which represents 680 trees per acre (average). The survival monitoring number is compared to the planted number to obtain survival percentage. This percentage is applied to the 680 trees per acre to obtain an estimated tree per acre for the site.

$$\text{Density} = \frac{\text{monitoring count}}{\text{planted trees}} \times 680 \text{ (trees per acre)}$$

Notes from Report: Phase I of site is complete. Phase II construction is to be completed next year and planted in spring 2001. Grasses and fennel present throughout site. Some plots contained standing water at time of monitoring. Juncus was also present in some plots.

3.4 Conclusions

Of the 658 acres of this site, approximately 575 acres involved tree planting. There were 32 test plots established throughout the planting areas, covering all plant communities. The first year vegetation monitoring of the planted areas revealed an average density to be 550 trees per acre, which is well above the minimum requirement of 320 trees per acre.

The remainder of the site will be planted spring 2001.

4.0 OVERALL CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

For the Year 1999, only one of thirty-two monitoring wells indicated optimum hydrologic success of at least 12.5% from March through August, while thirteen wells were below 5%. From September through November, twenty-three of the wells optimum hydrologic success of at least 12.5%, while two wells were below 5%.

While the results under "normal conditions" are not considered favorable, it must be taken into account that Phase 2 construction (filling of the central canal) will play a critical role in raising the water table on the site.

The first year vegetation monitoring of the planted areas revealed an average density to be 550 trees per acre, which is well above the minimum requirement of 320 trees per acre.

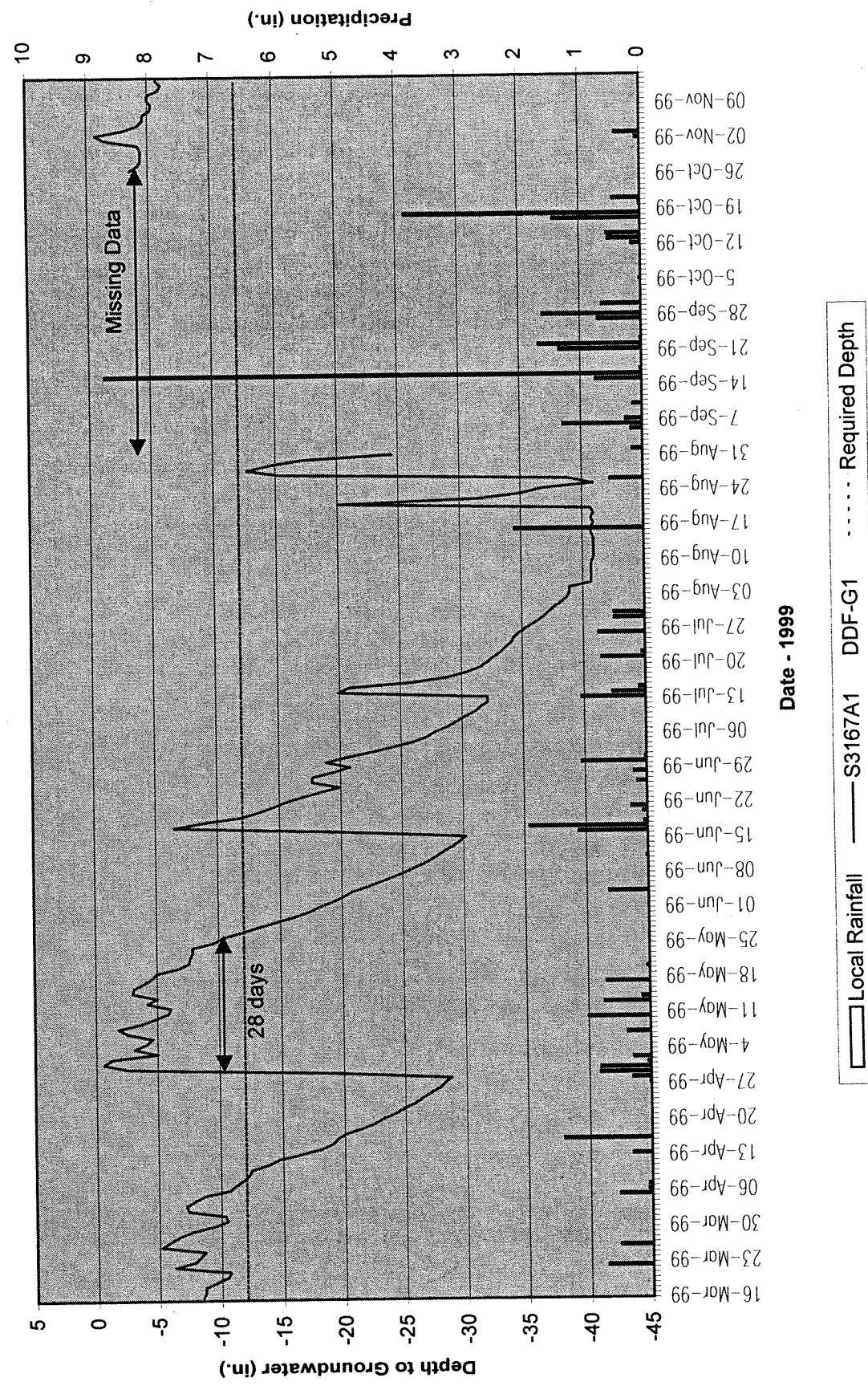
NCDOT will complete the Phase 2 construction the Year 2000. Planting will occur during spring 2001.

Meanwhile, NCDOT will continue to monitor both hydrology and site vegetation.

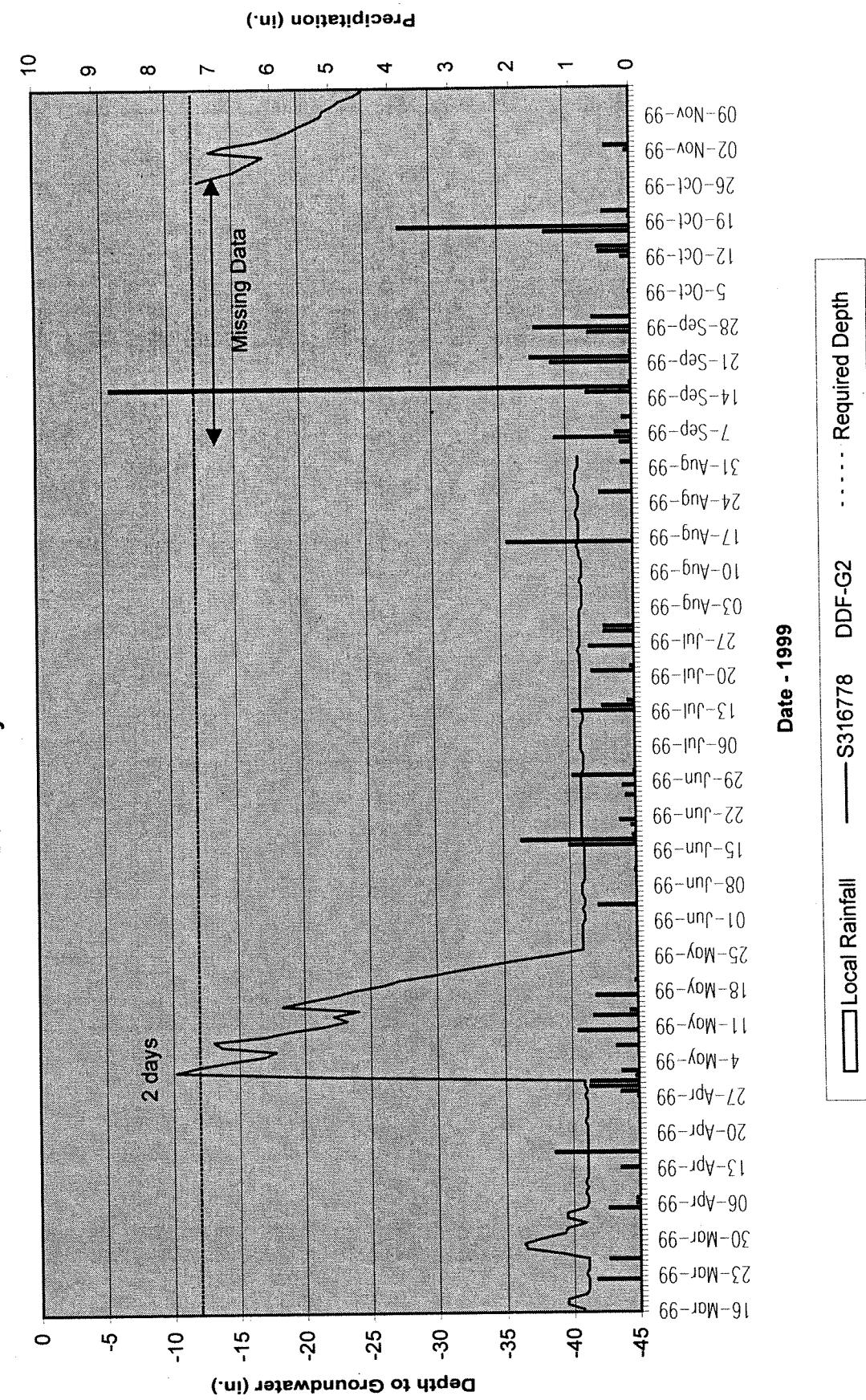
APPENDIX A

DEPTH TO GROUNDWATER PLOTS

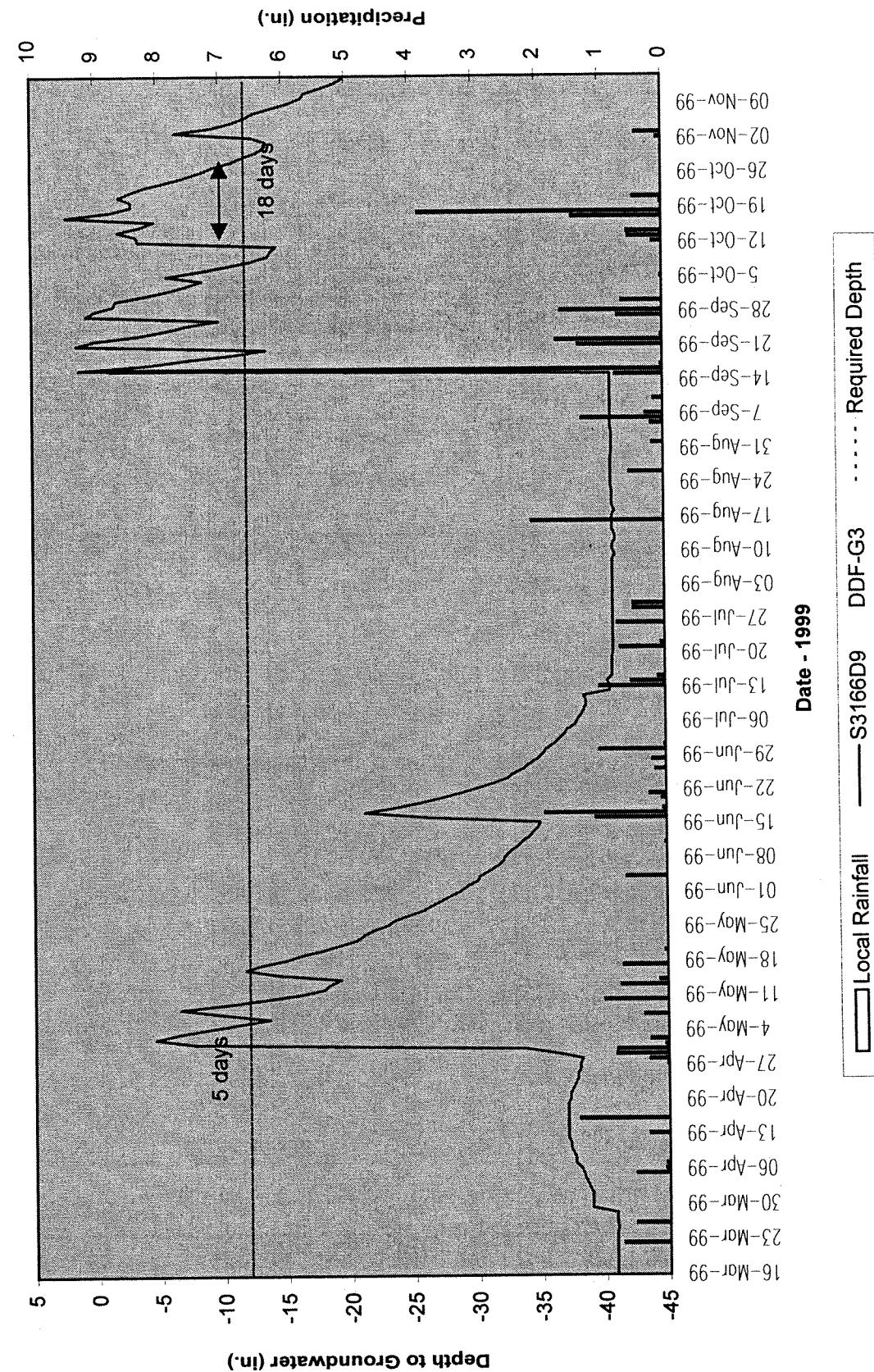
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G1



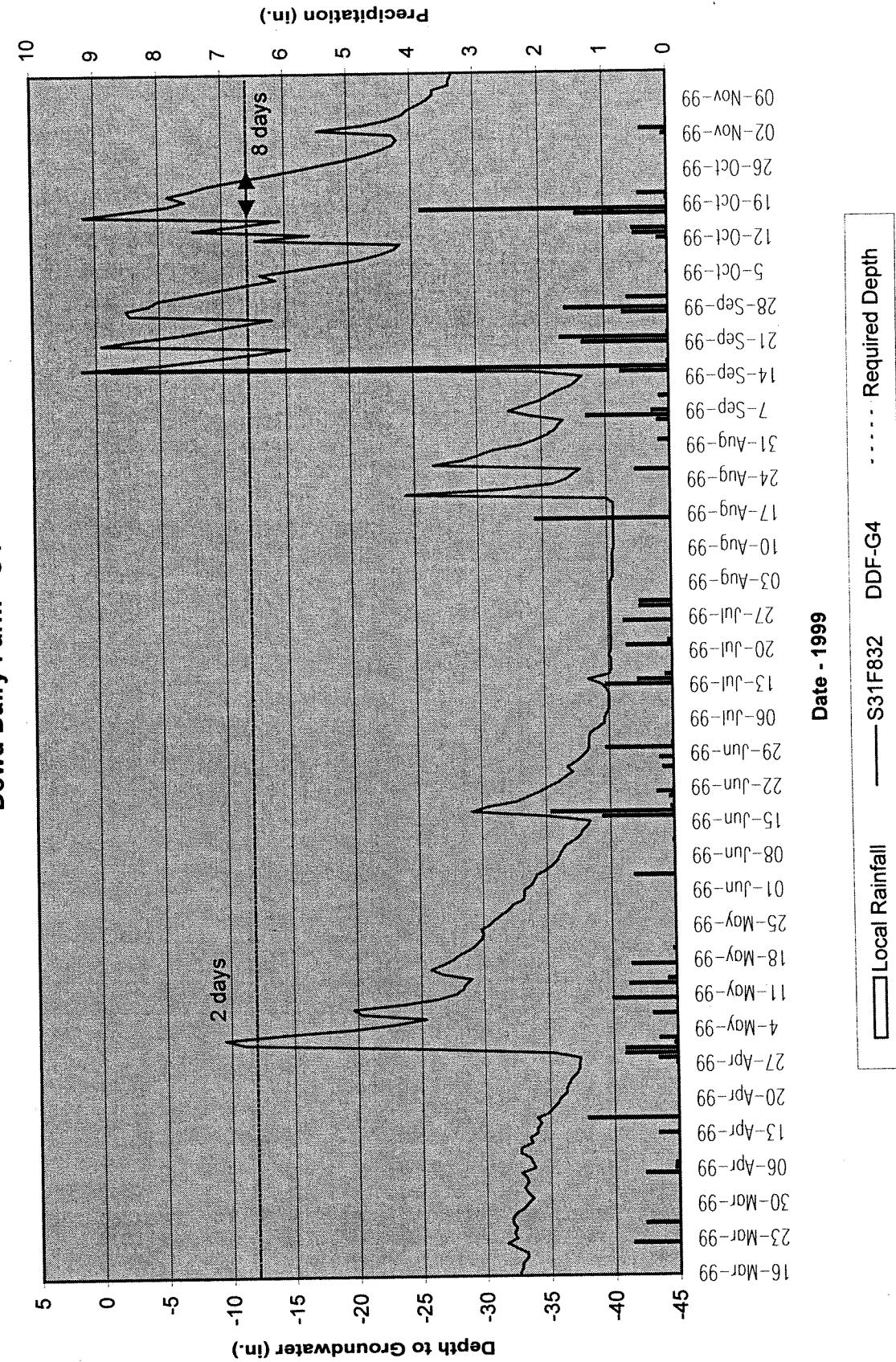
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G2



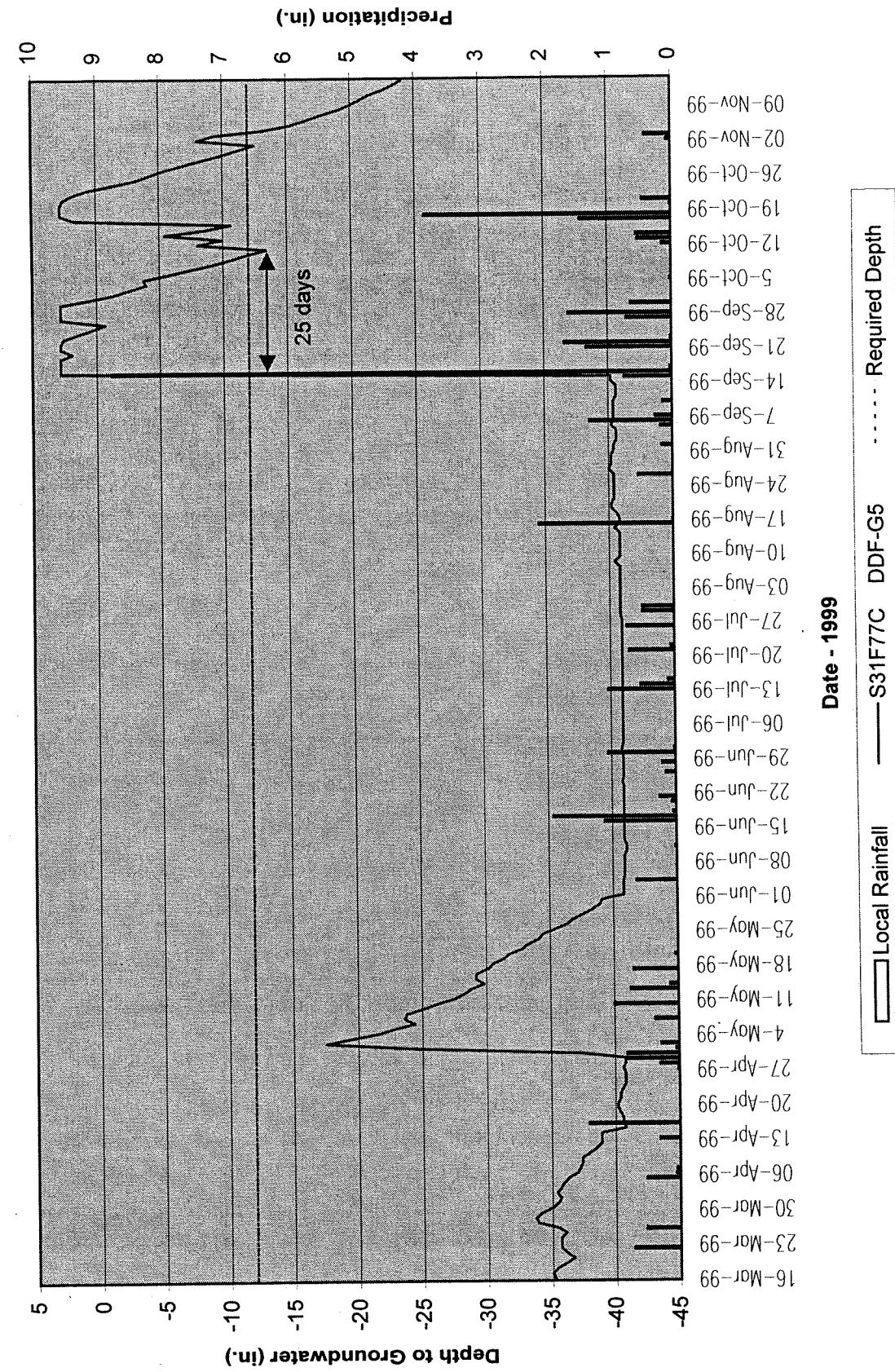
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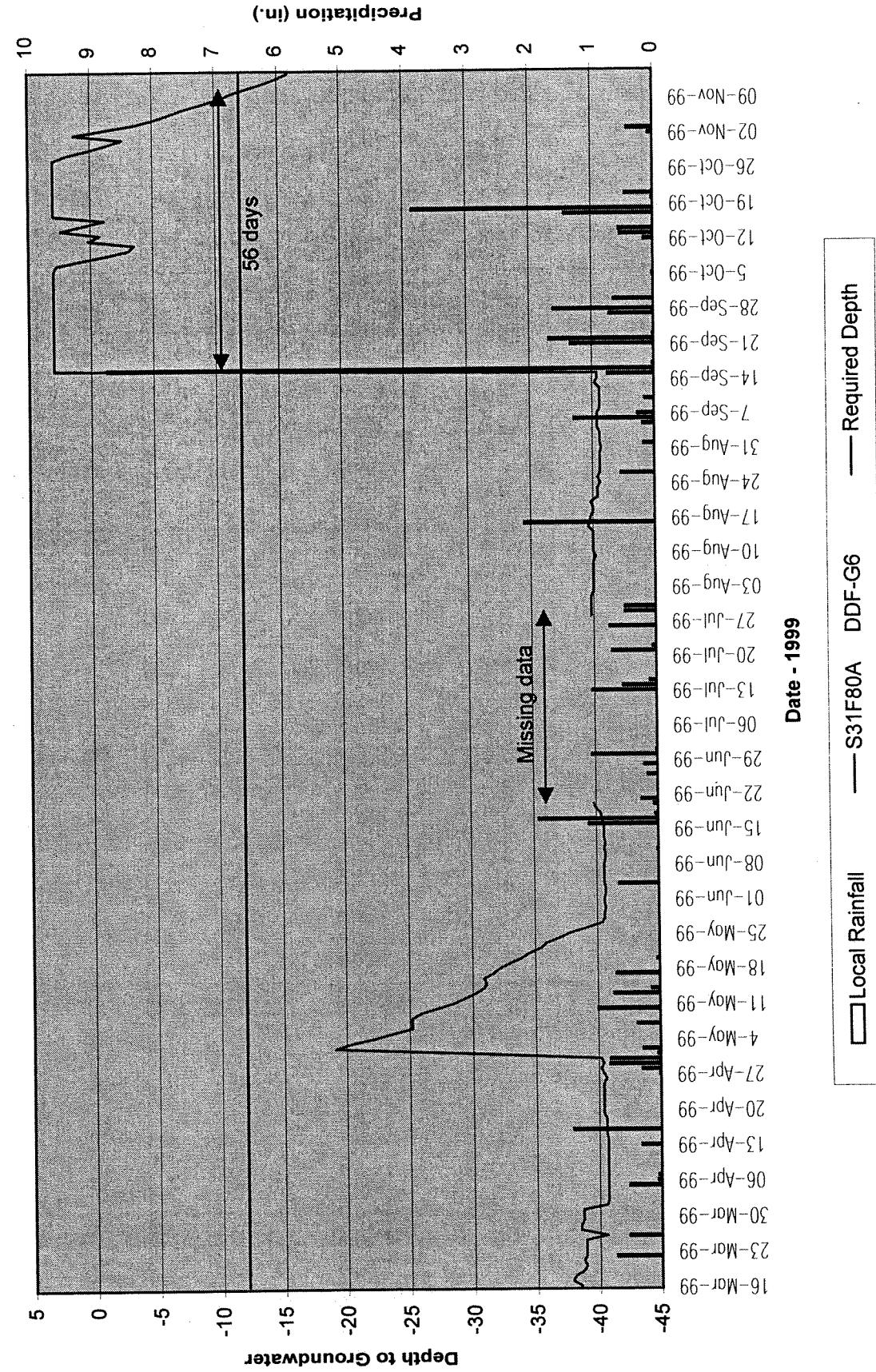
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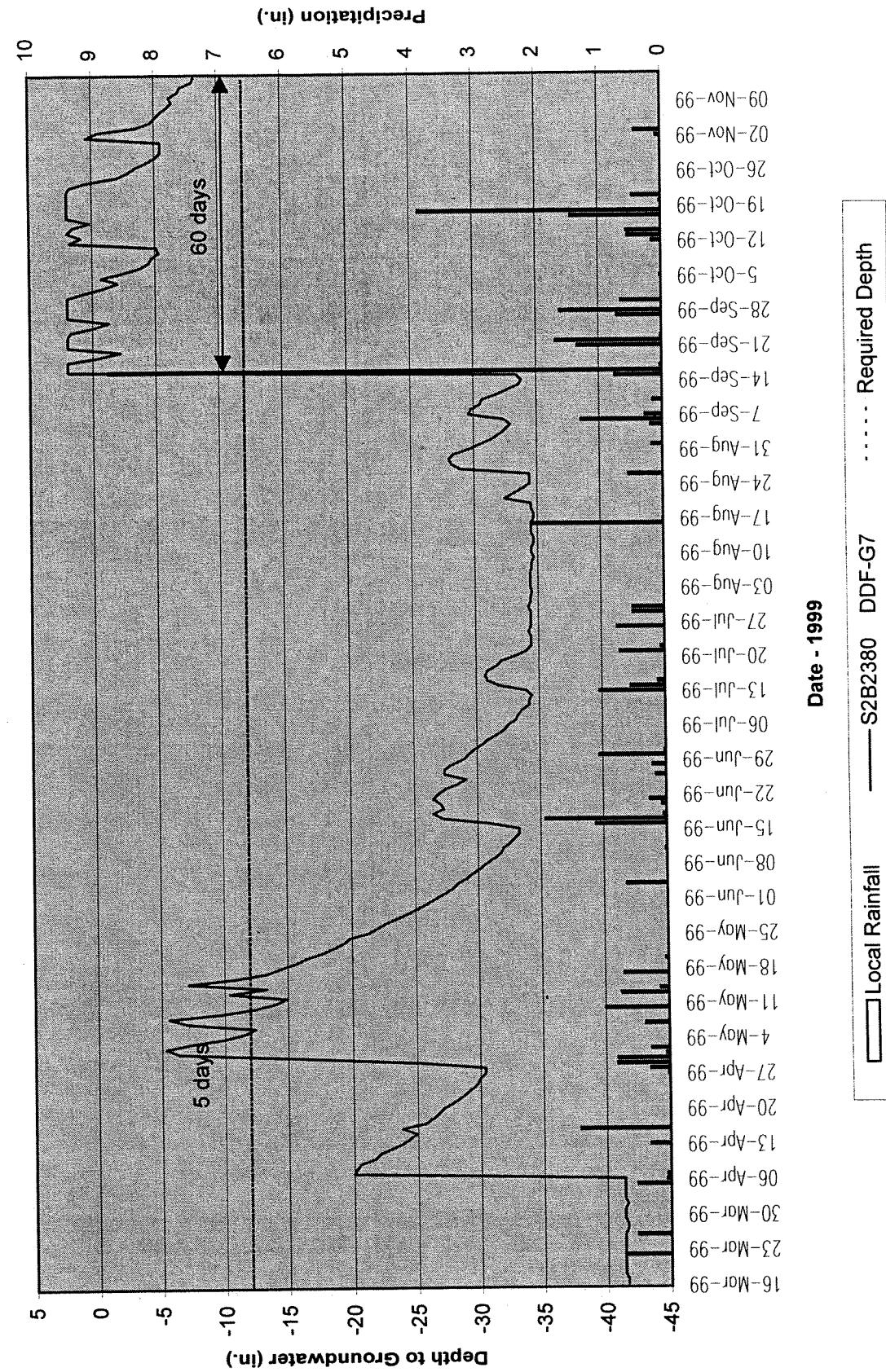
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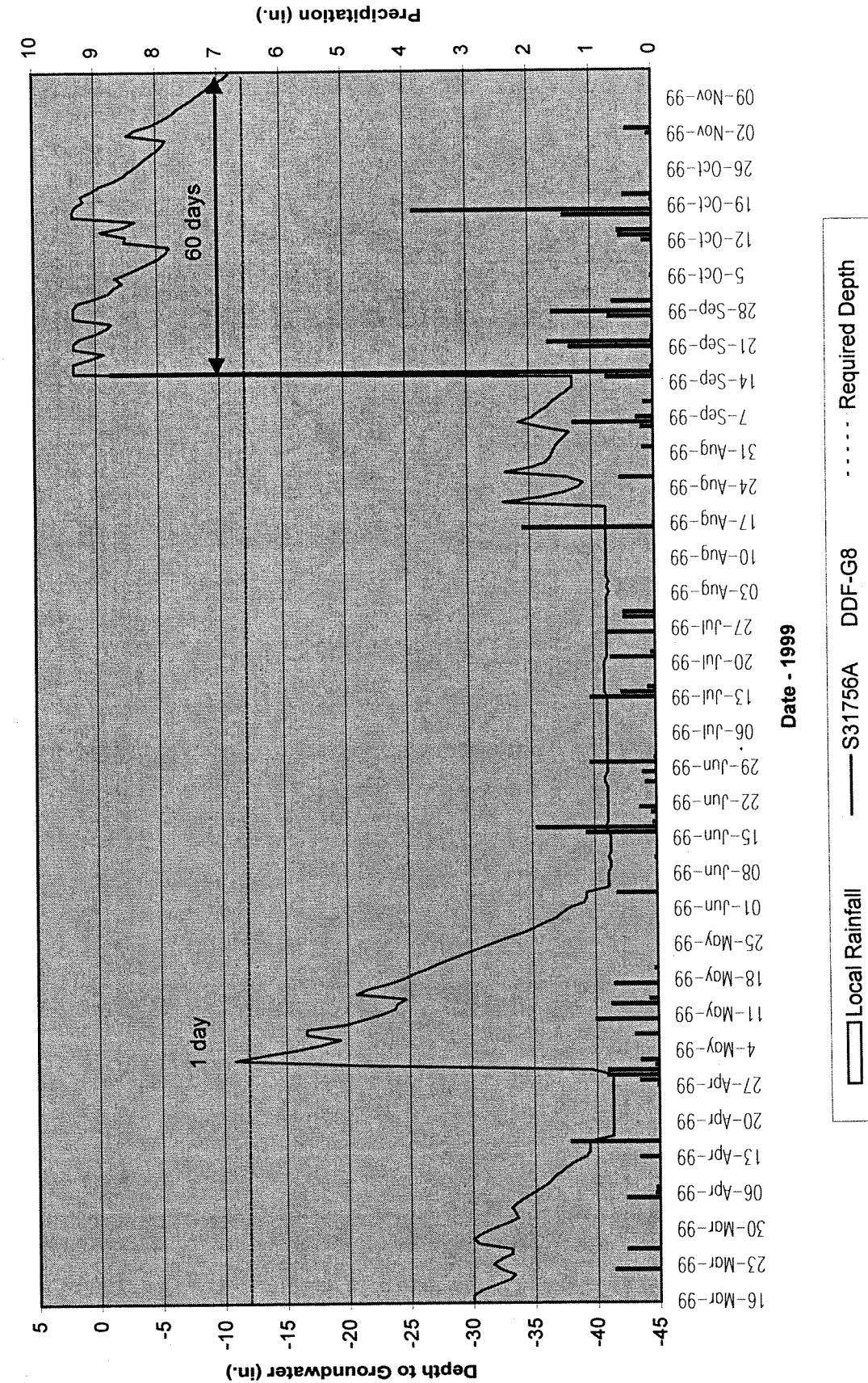
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G6



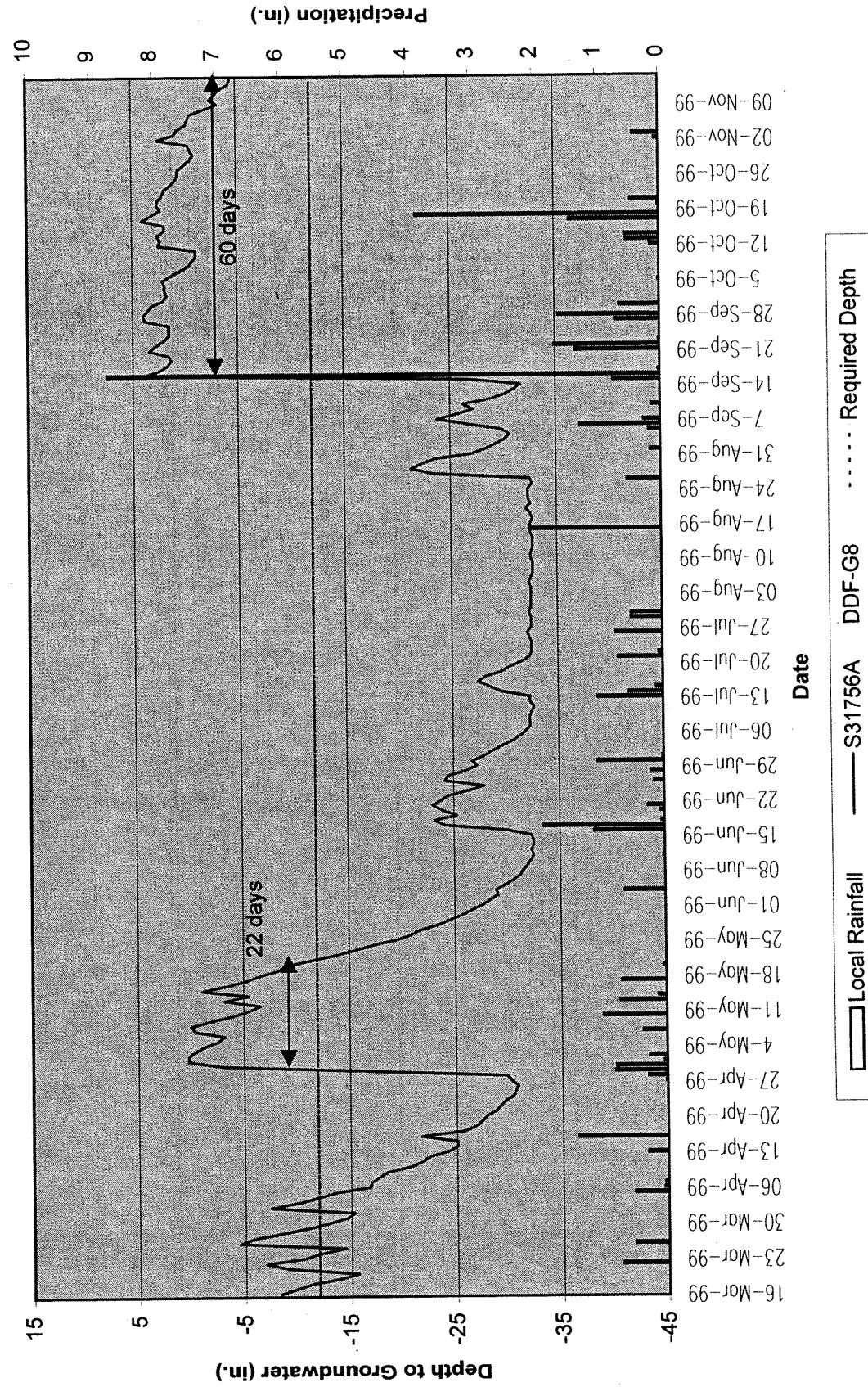
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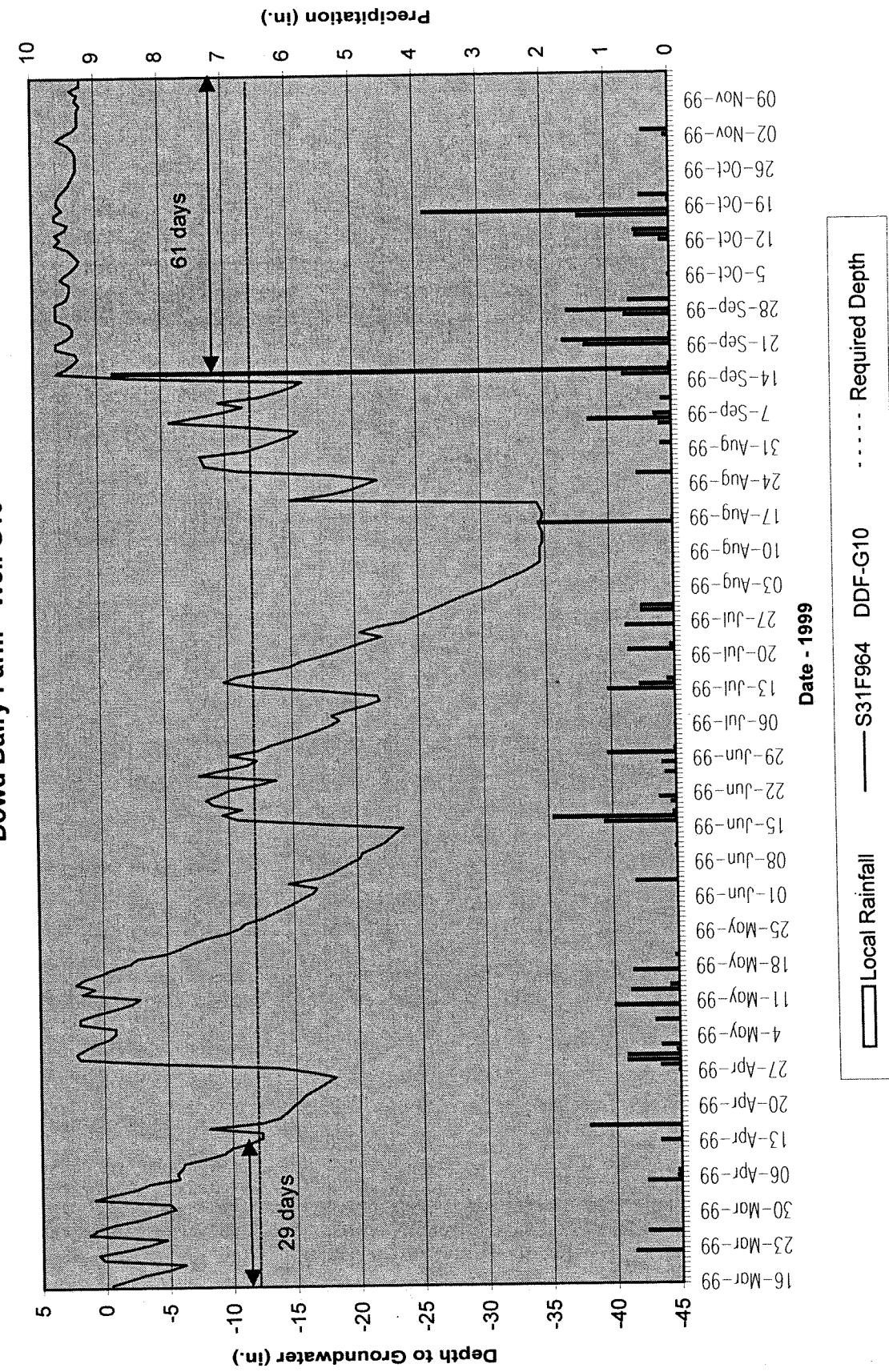
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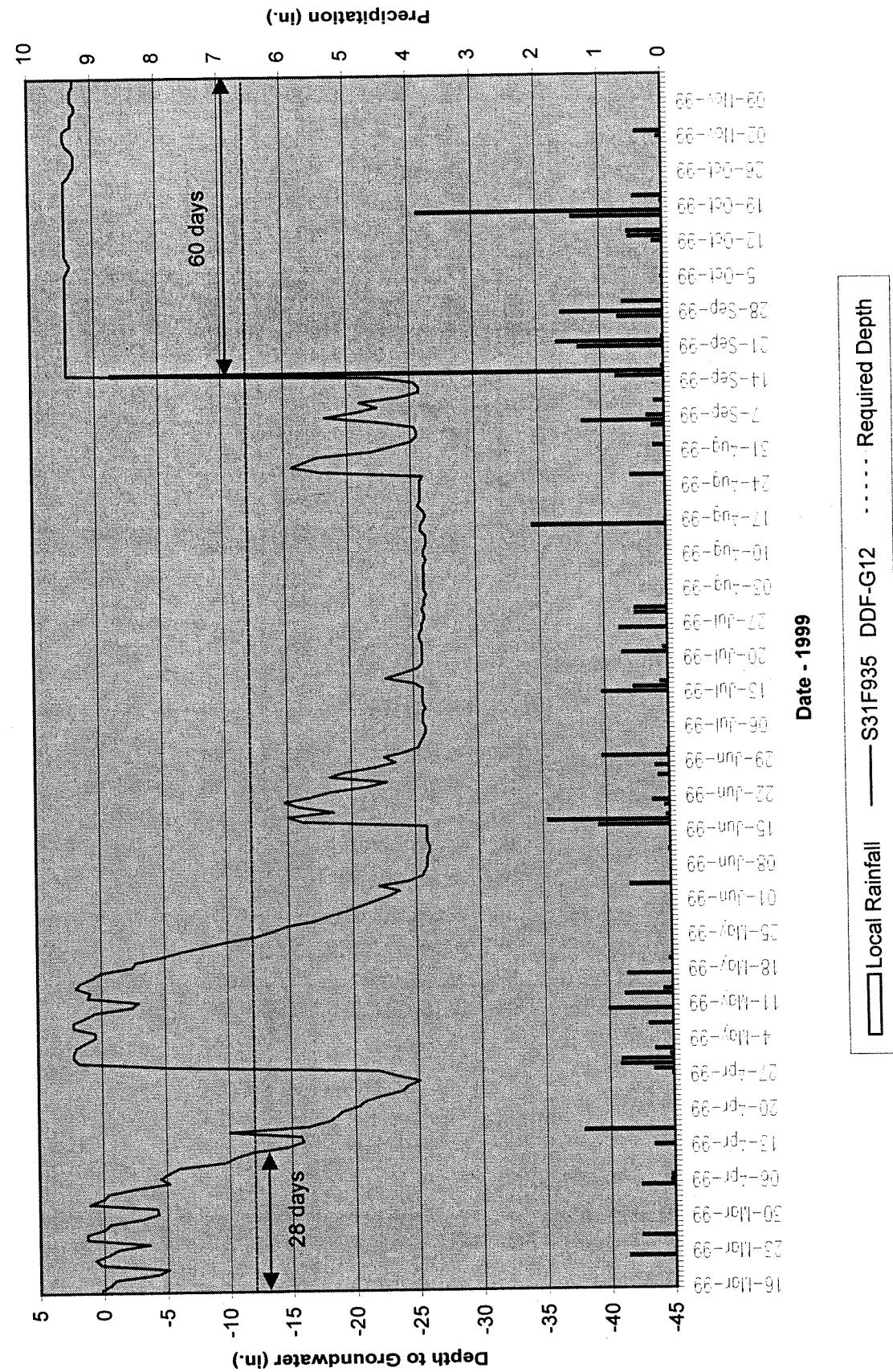
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G9



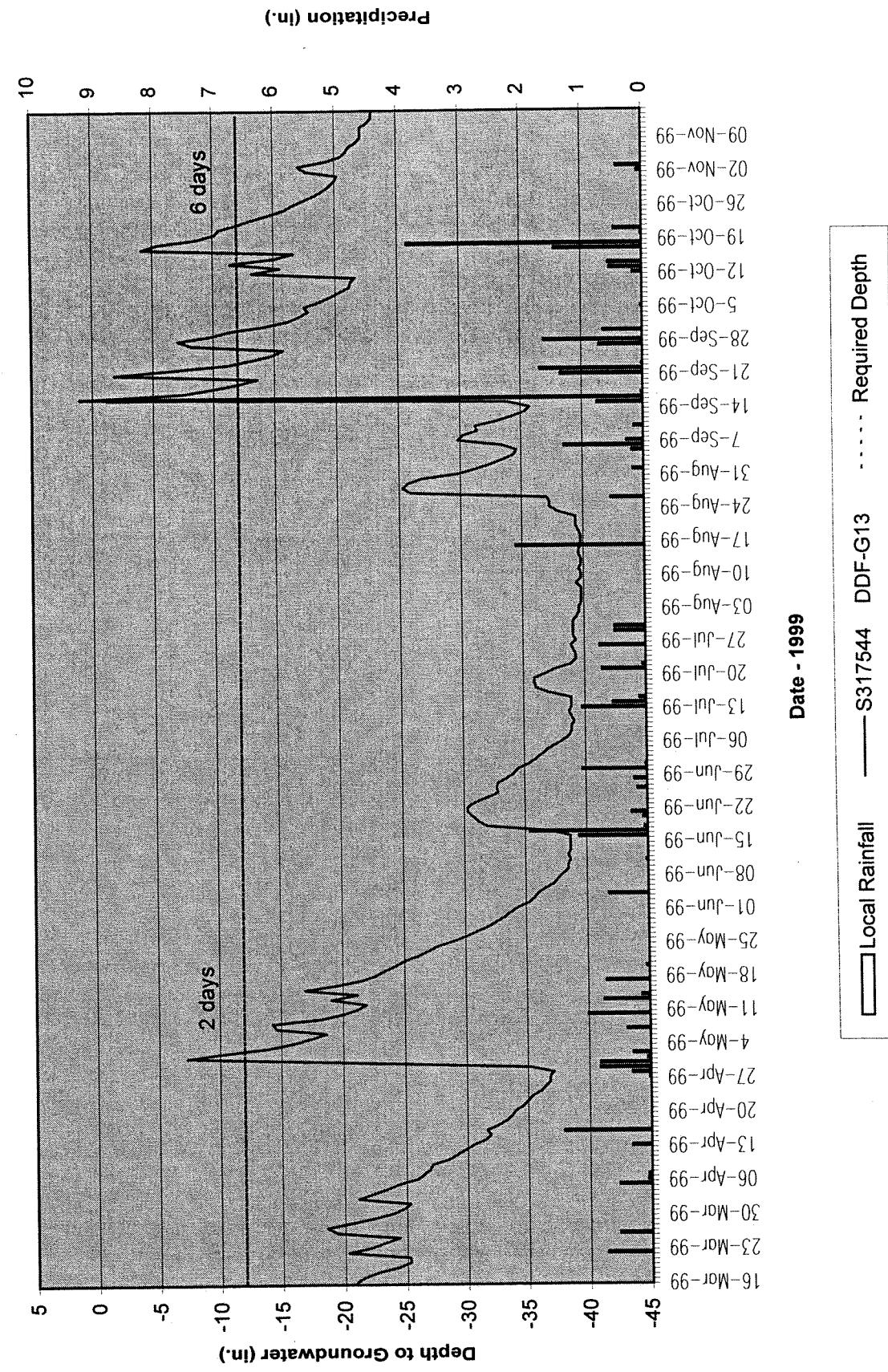
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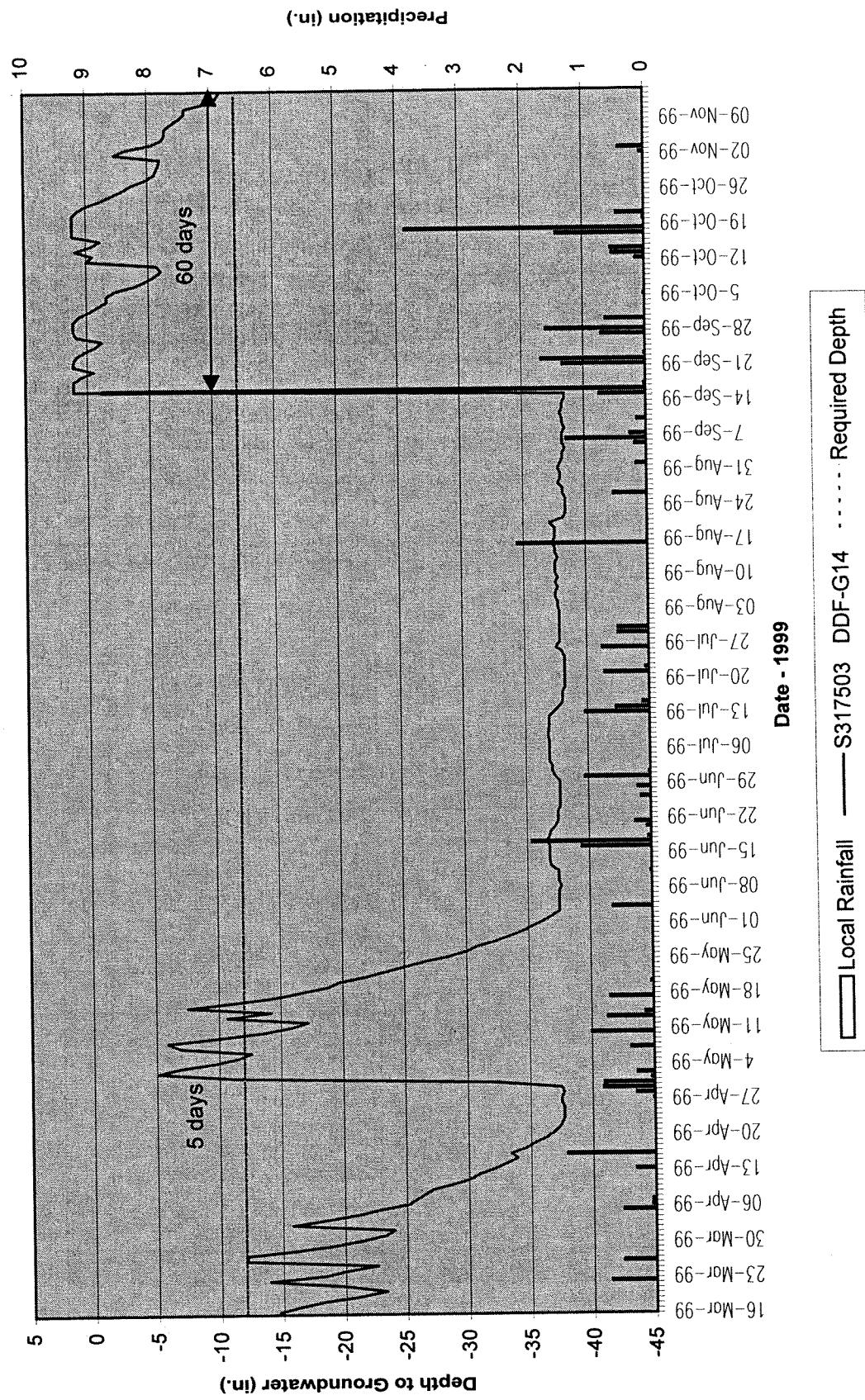
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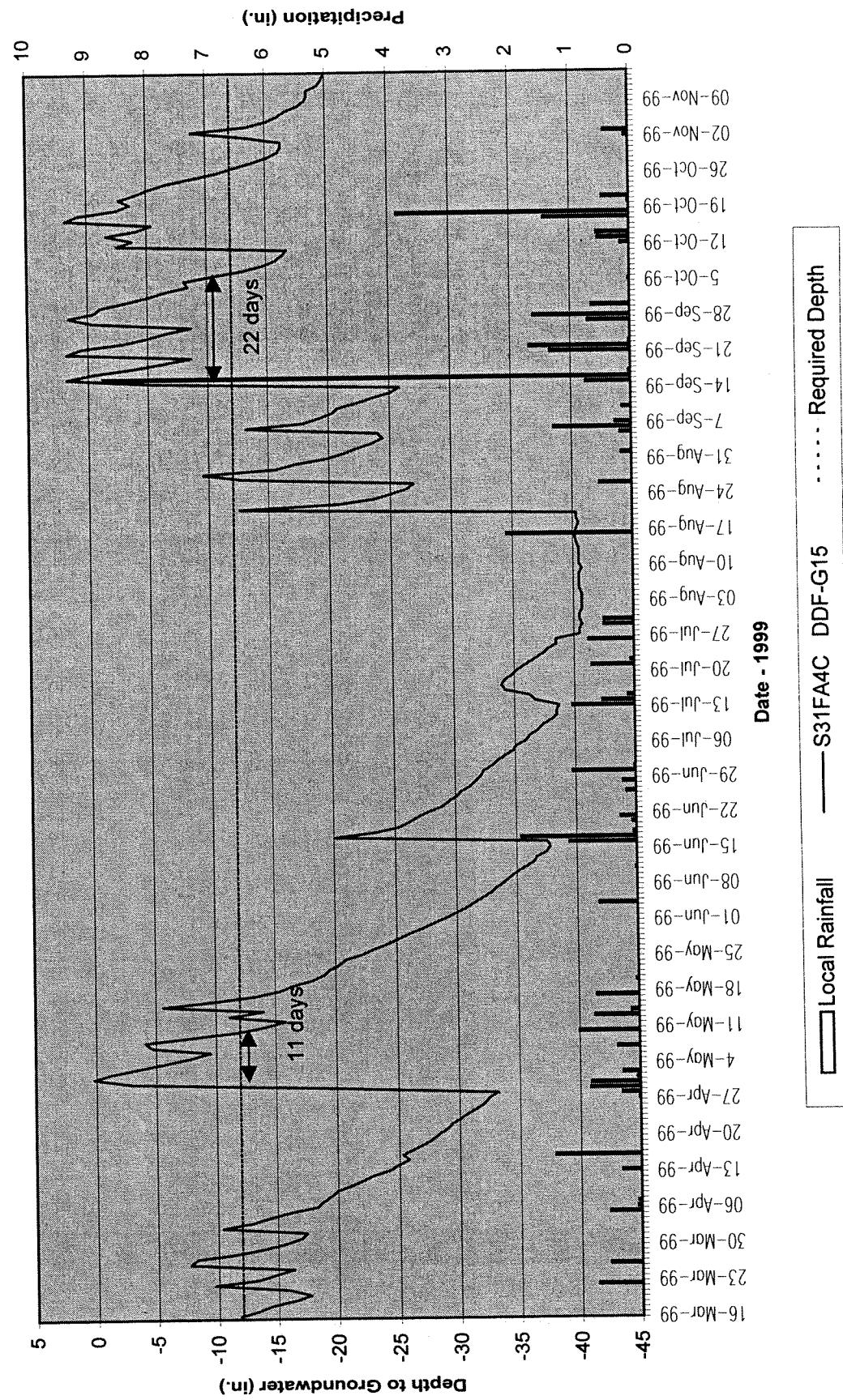
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G13



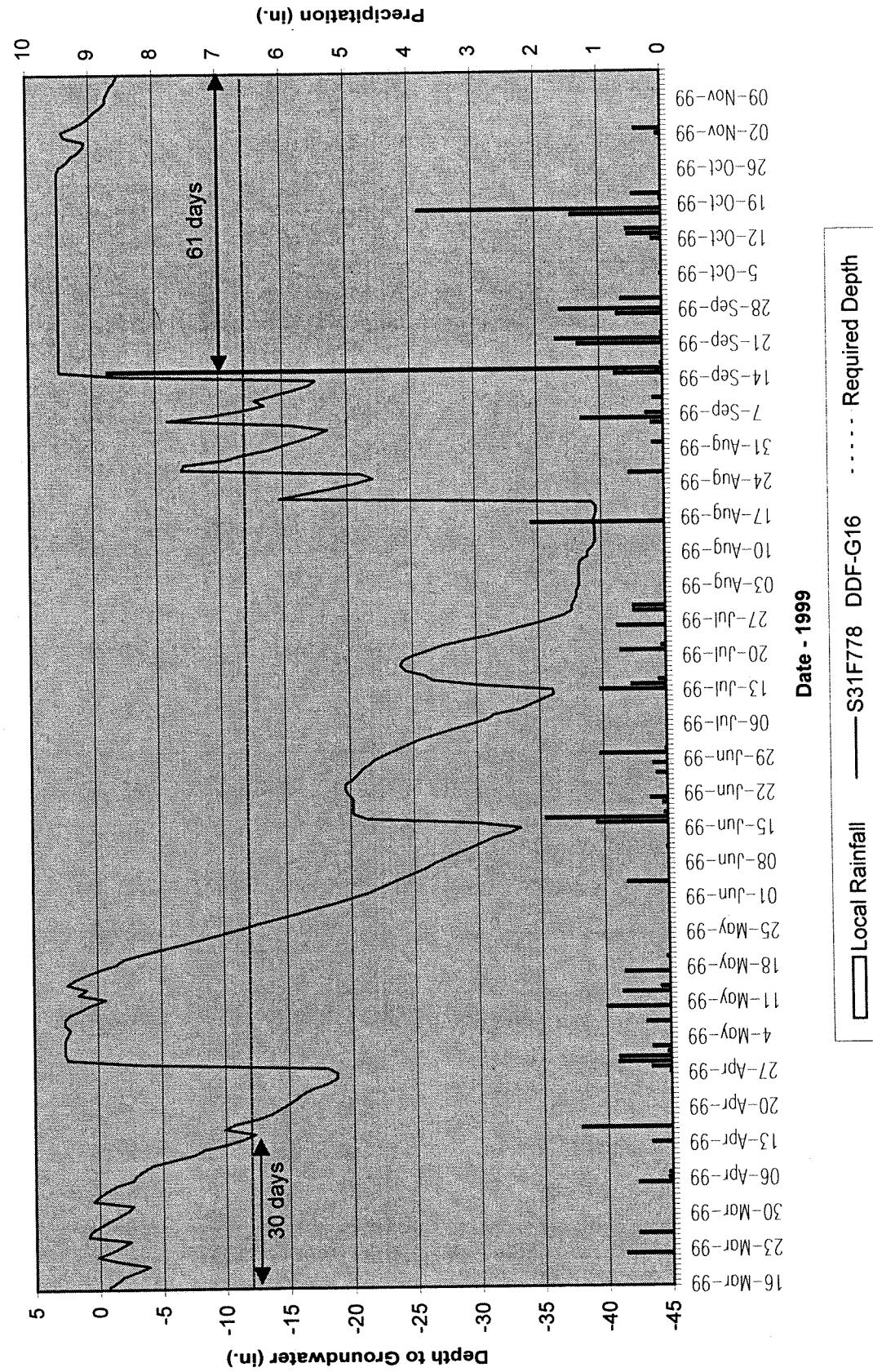
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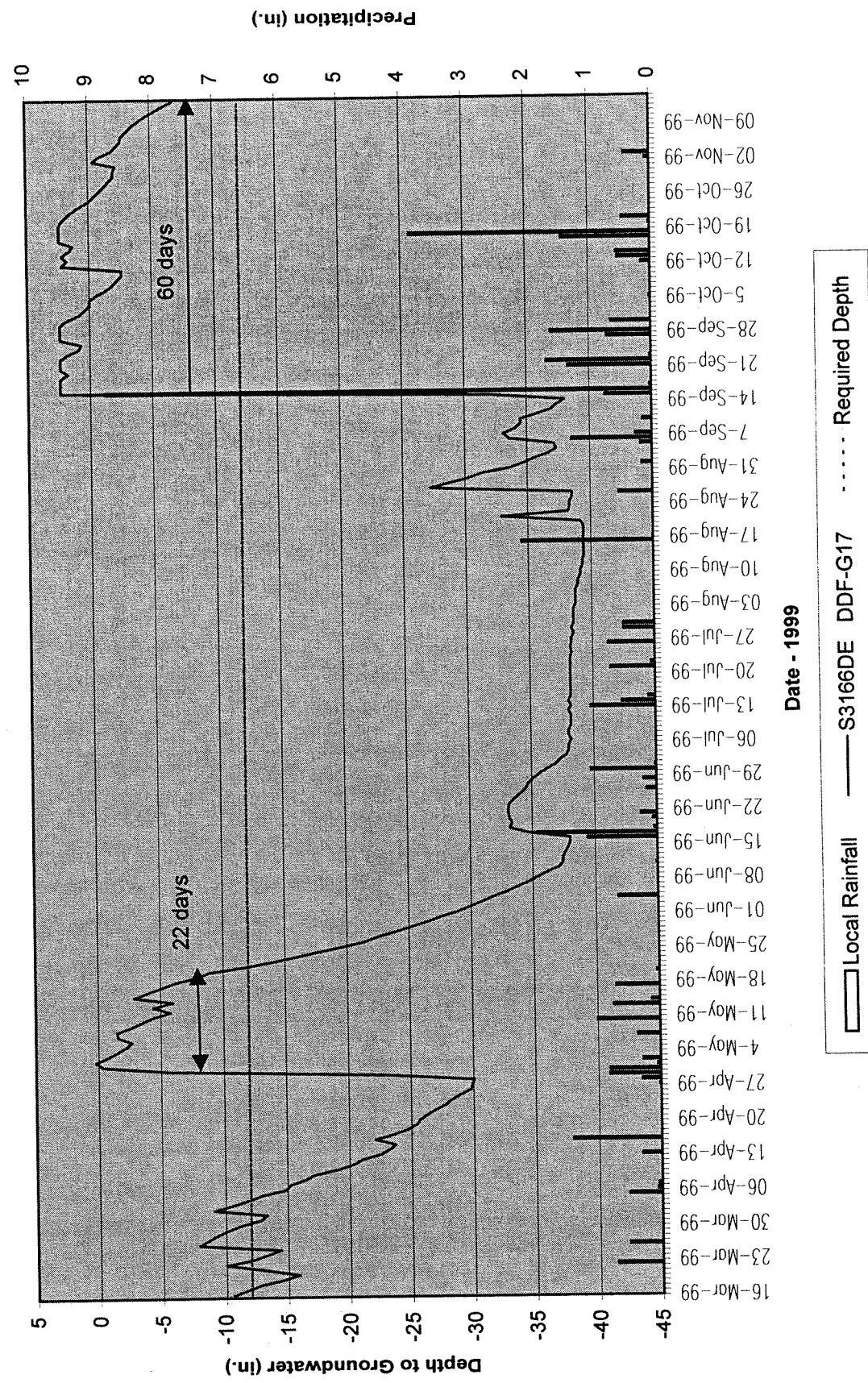
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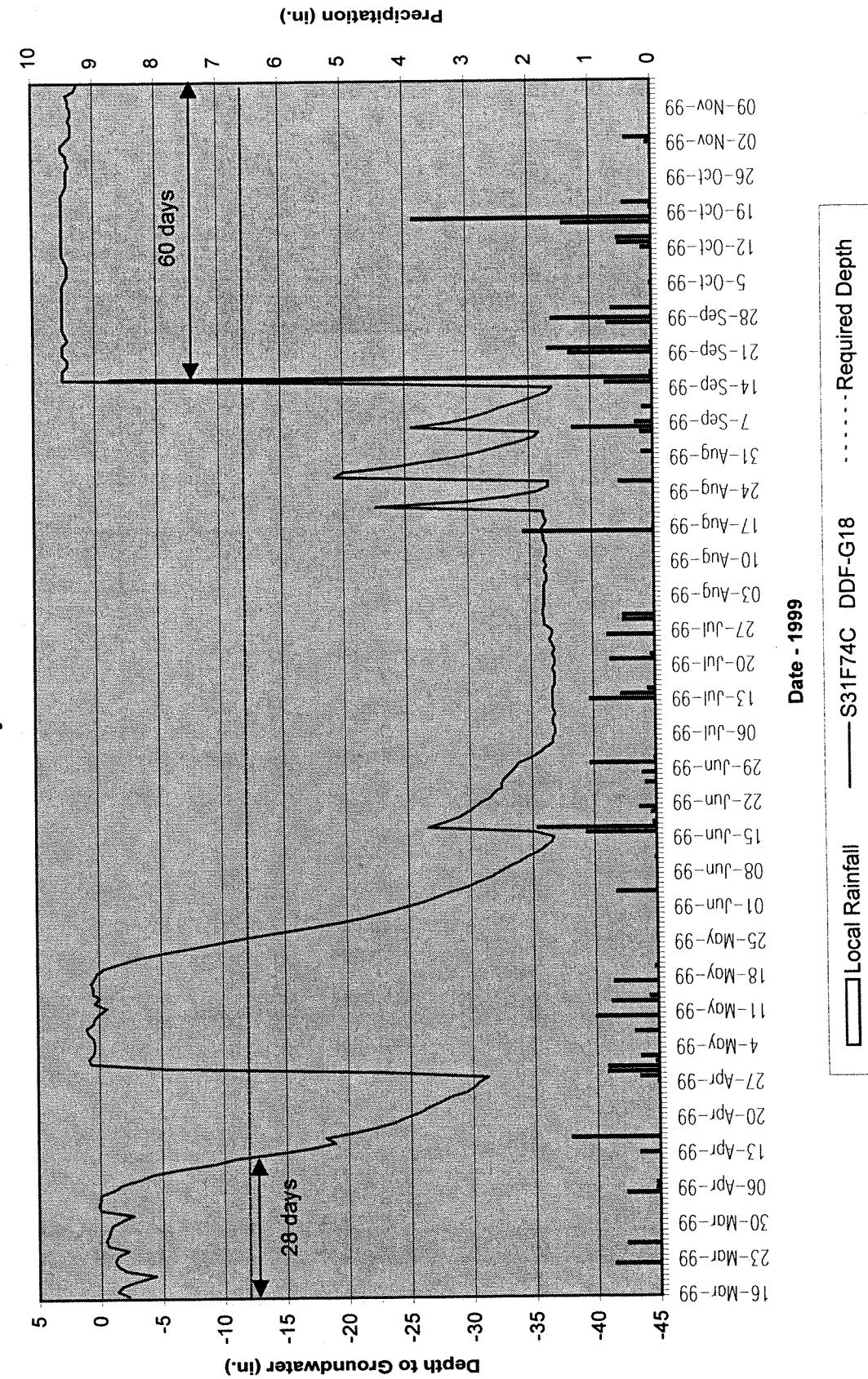
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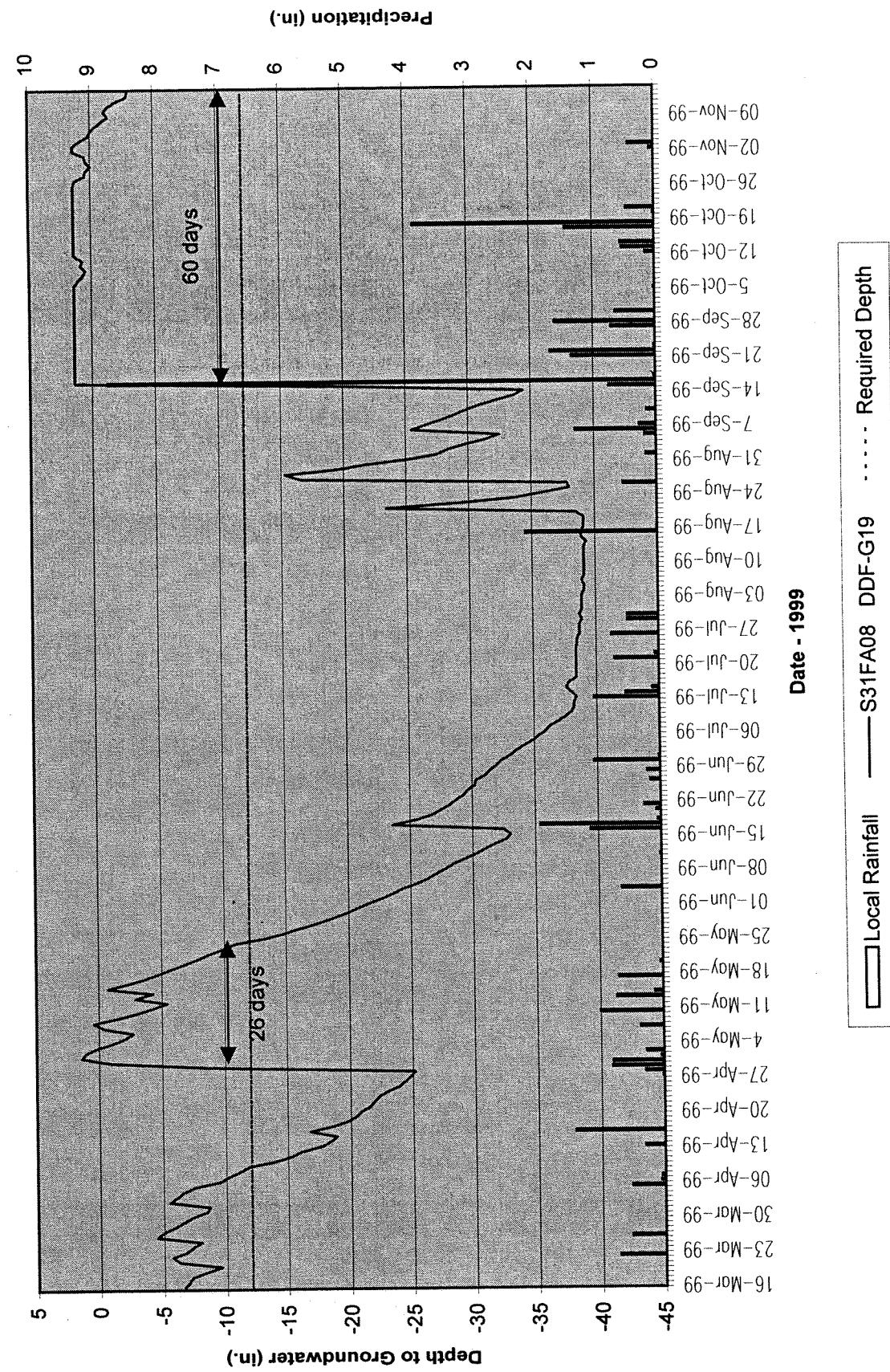
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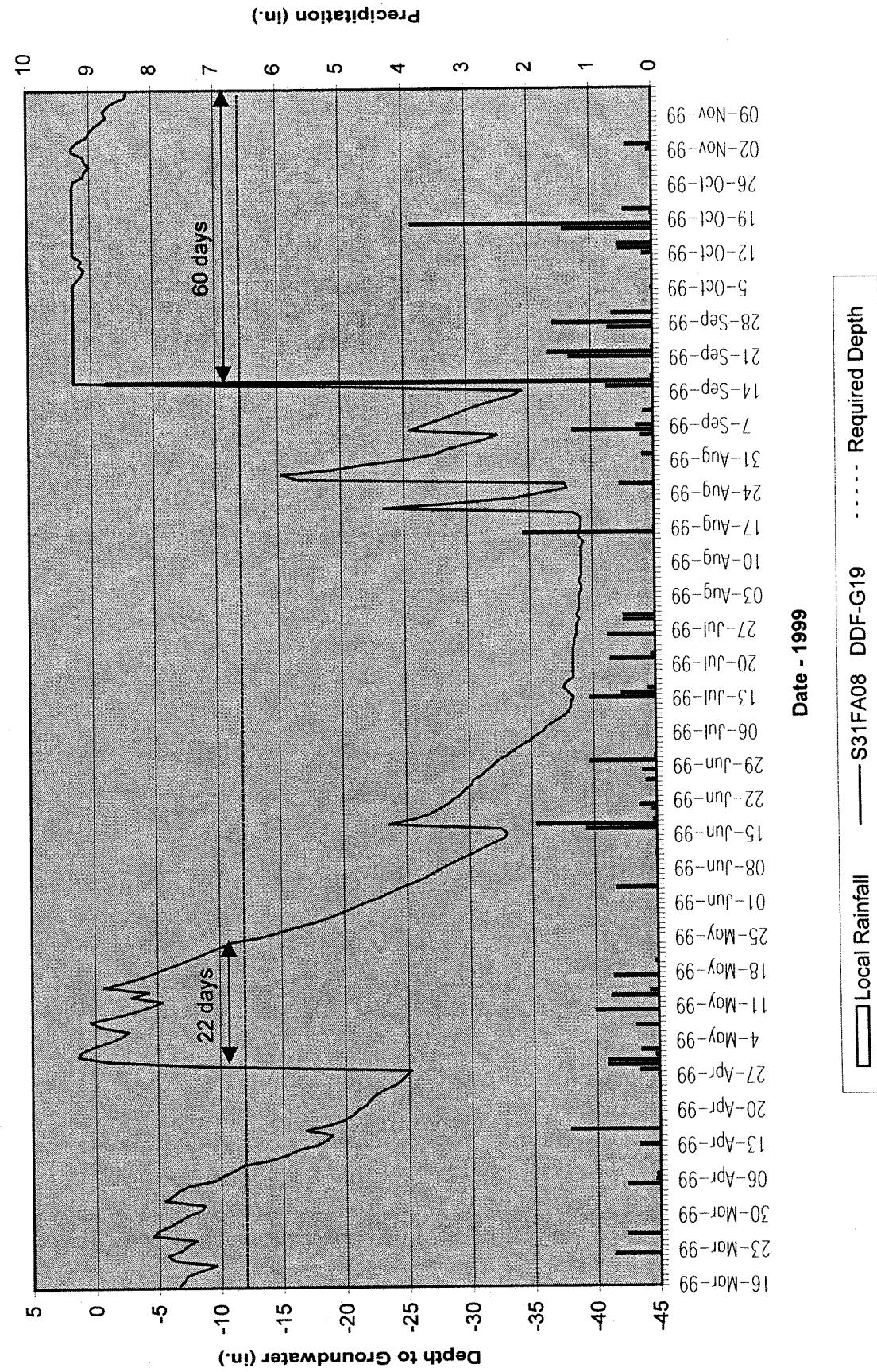
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G18



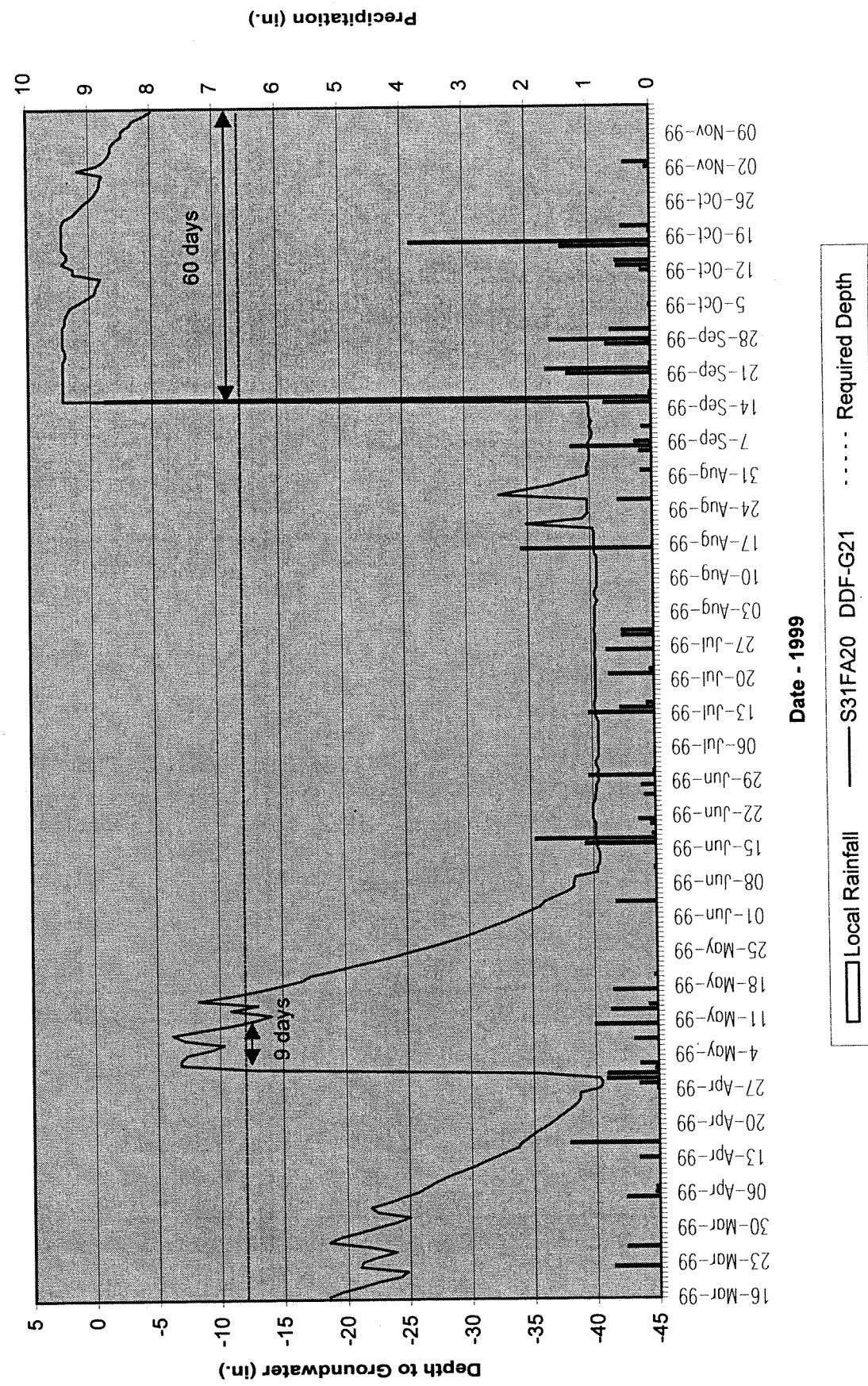
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G19



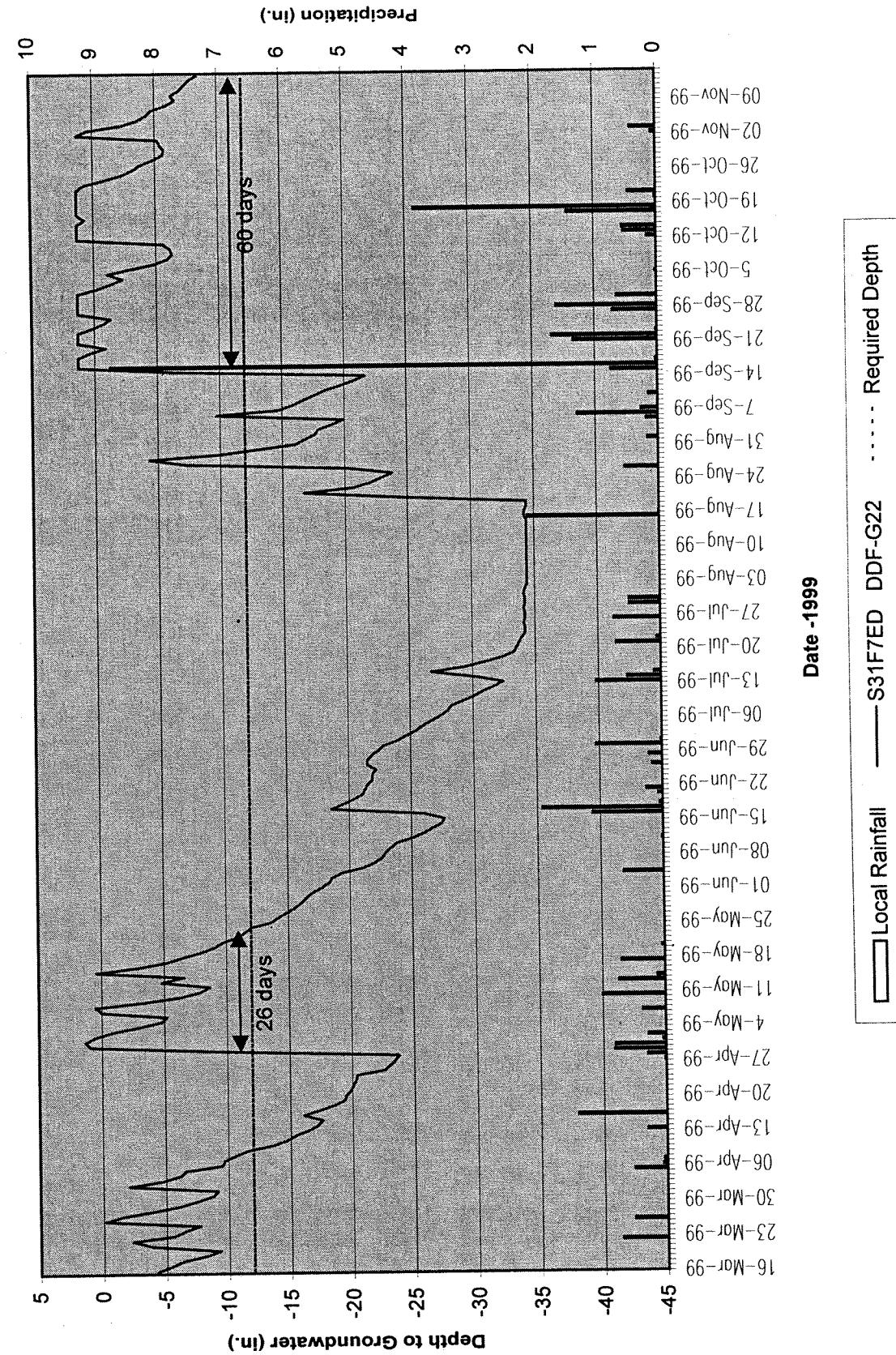
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G20



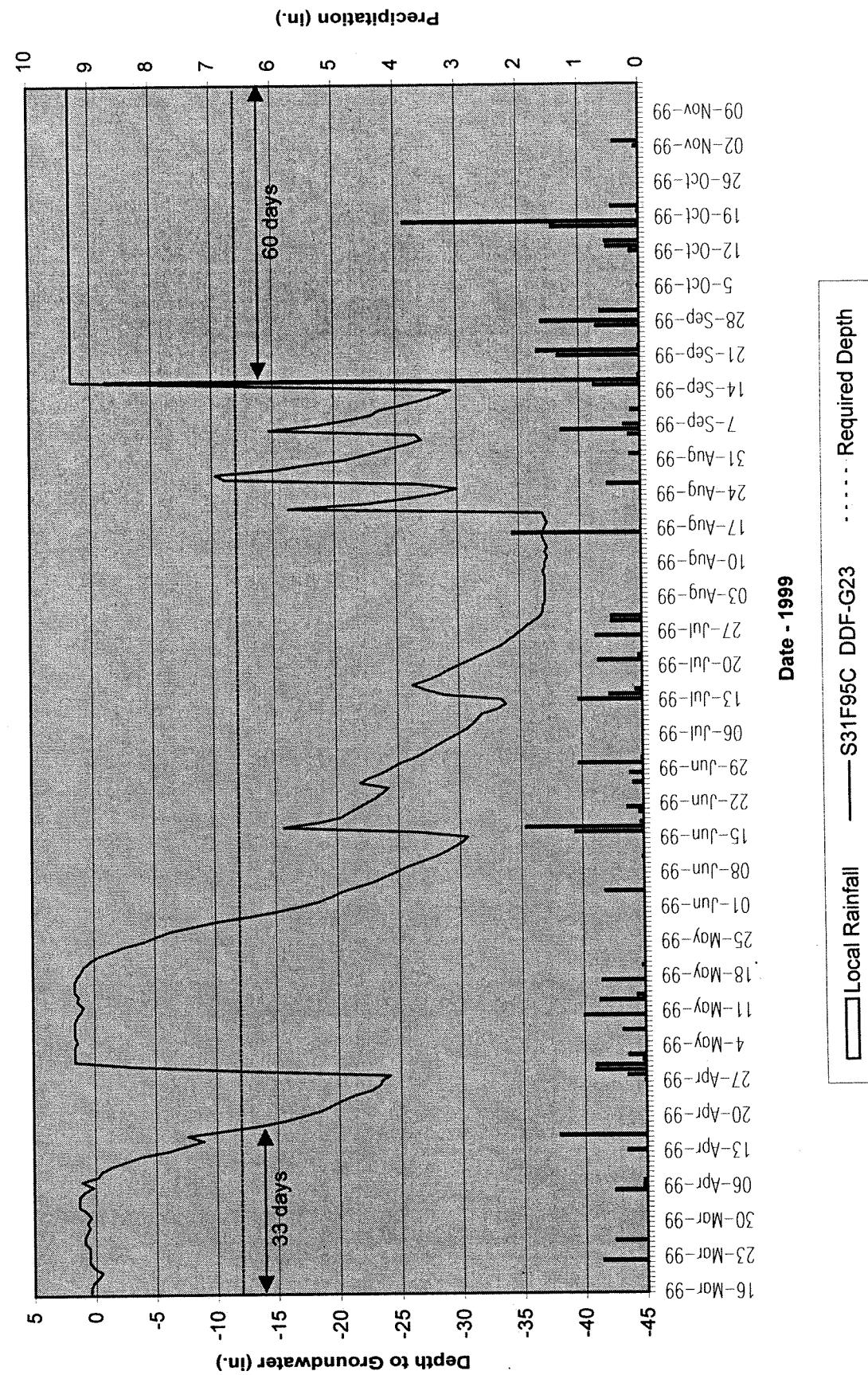
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G21



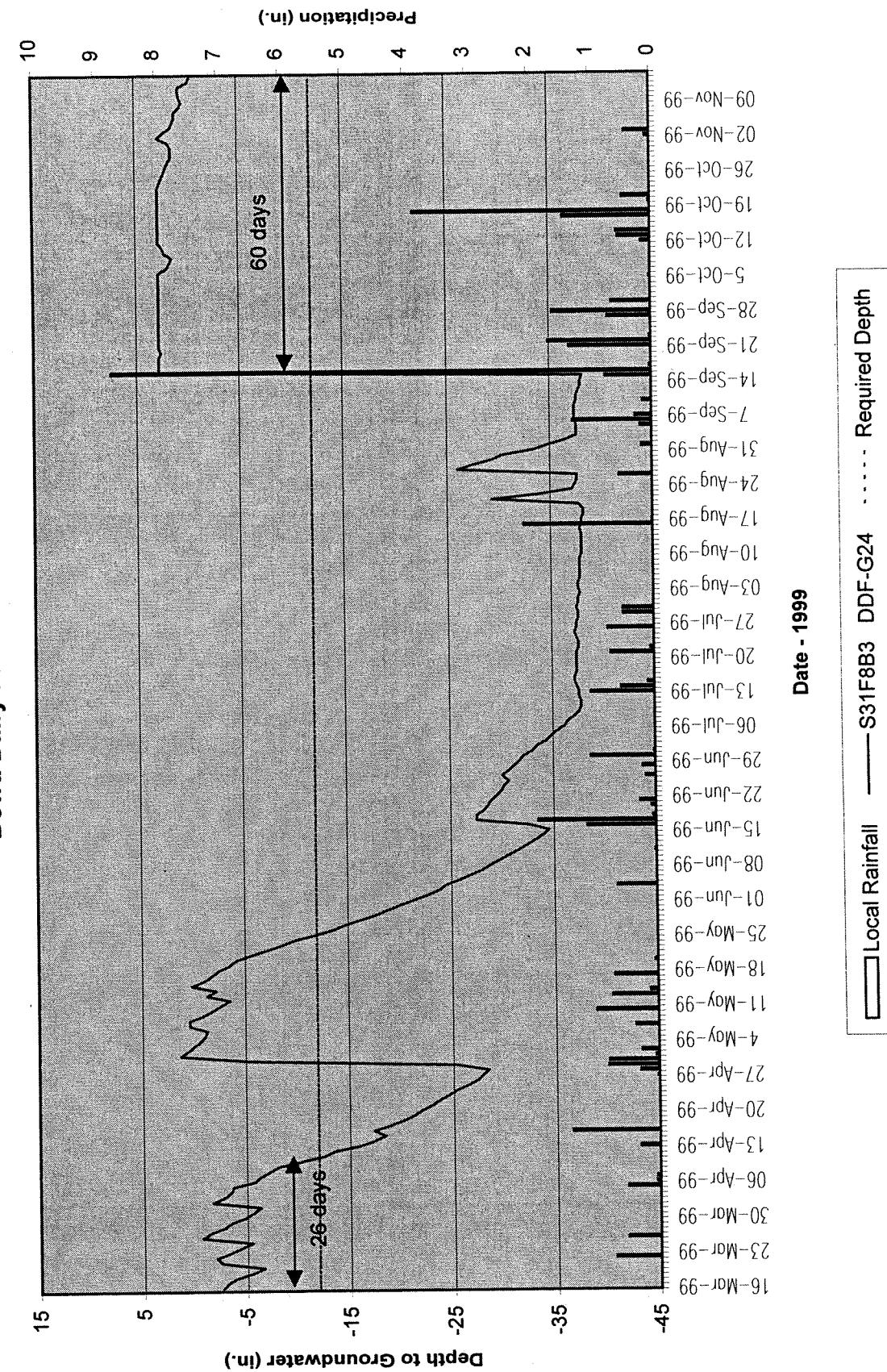
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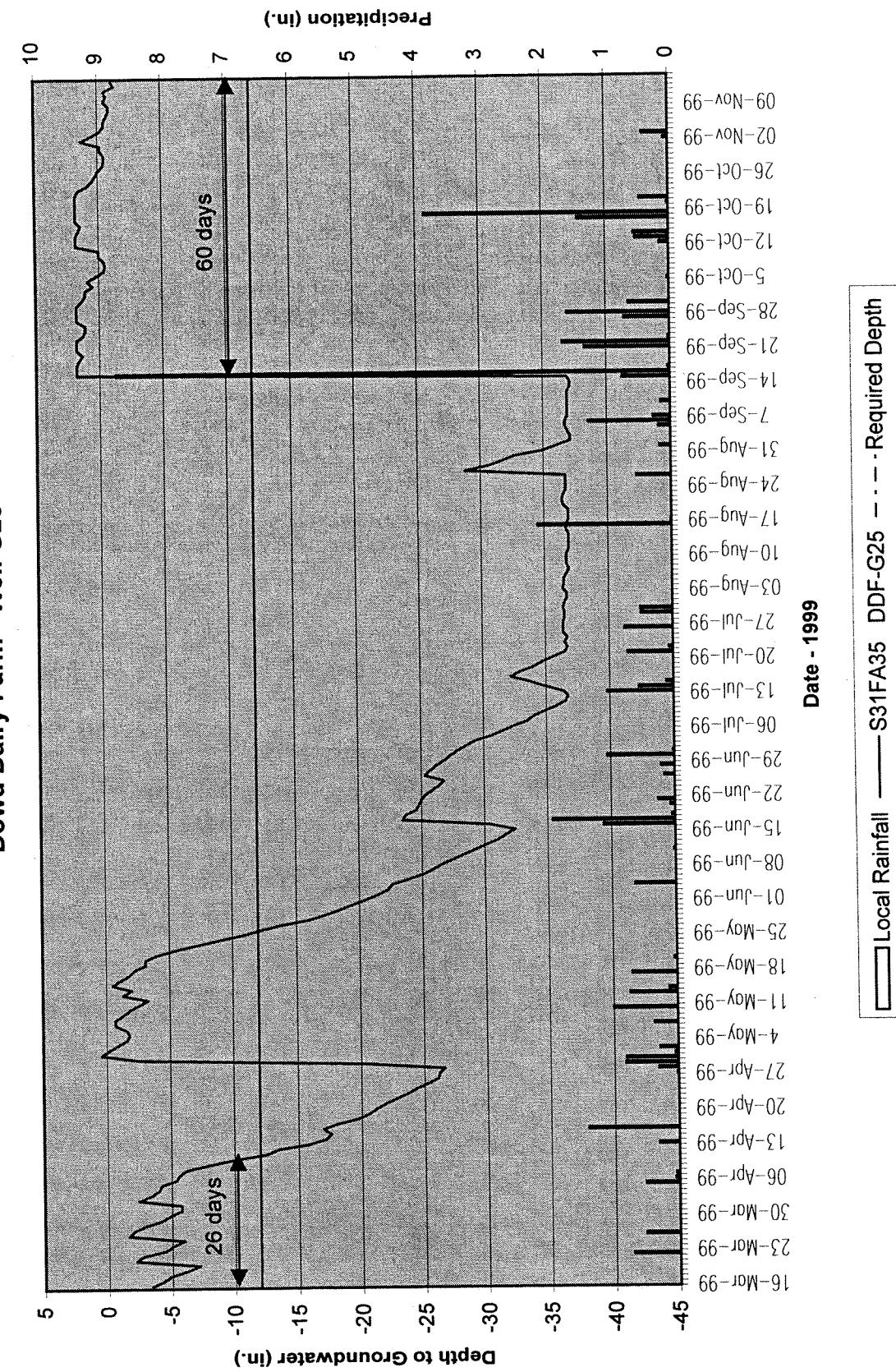
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G23



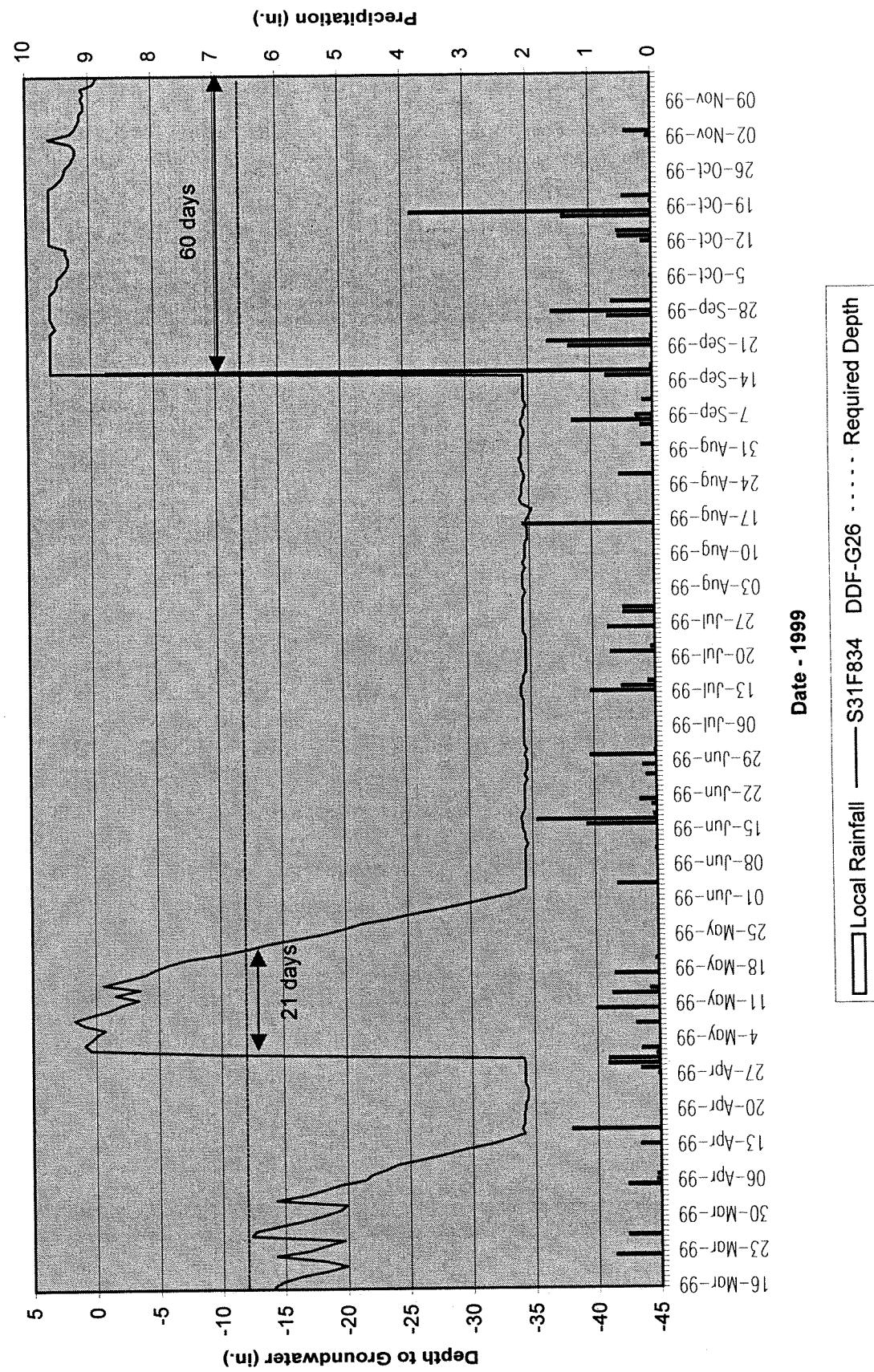
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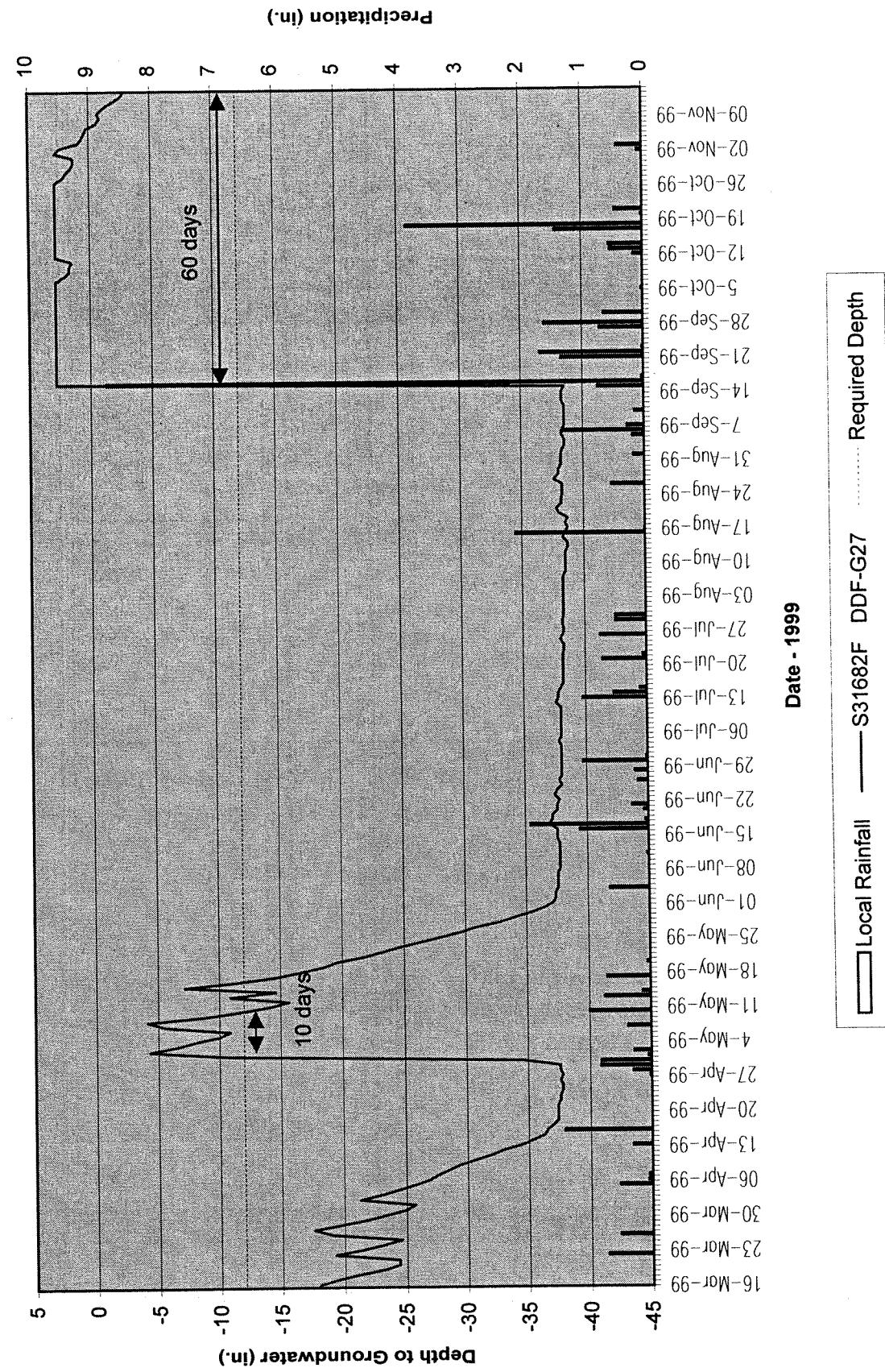
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G25



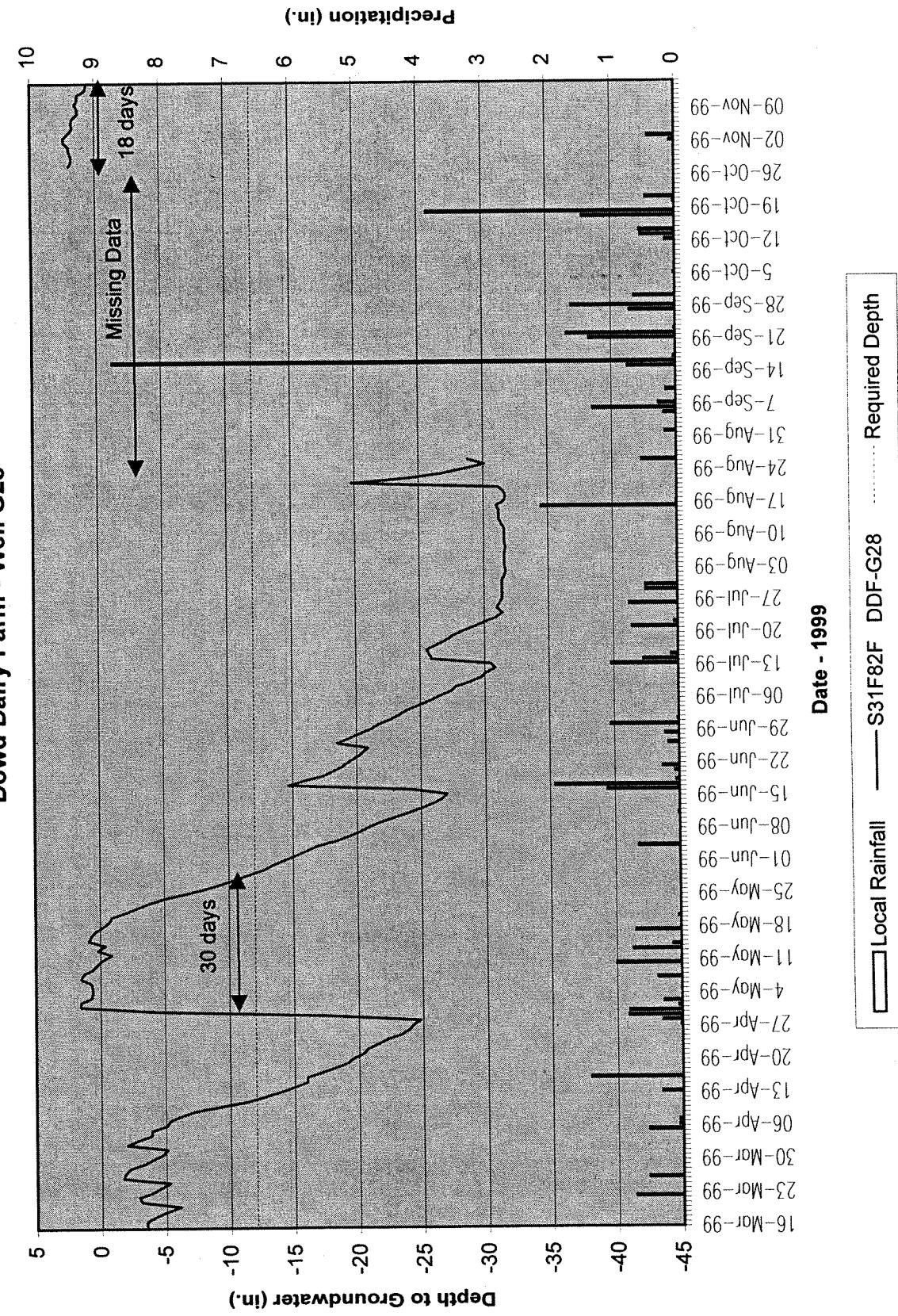
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G26



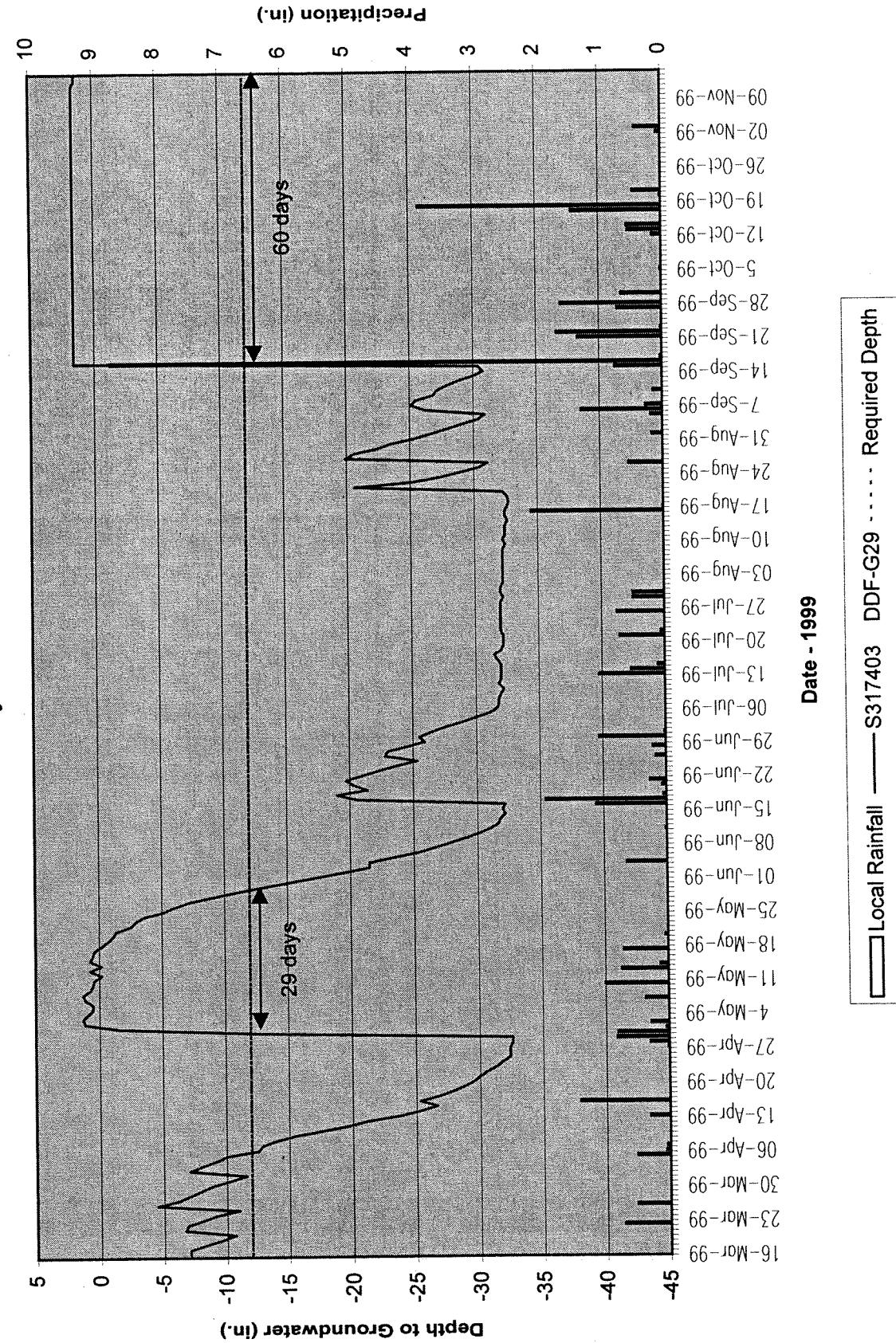
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G27



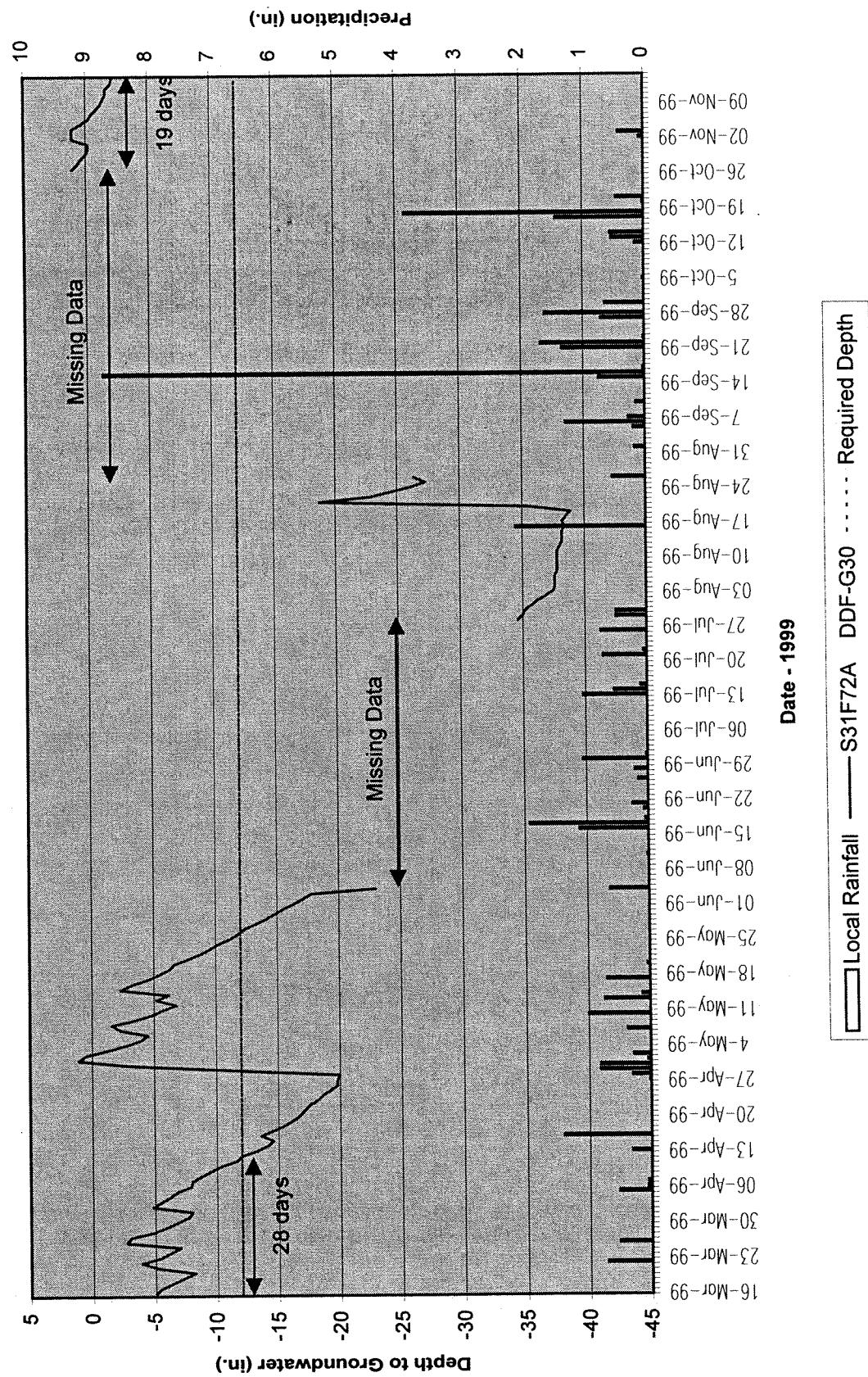
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G28



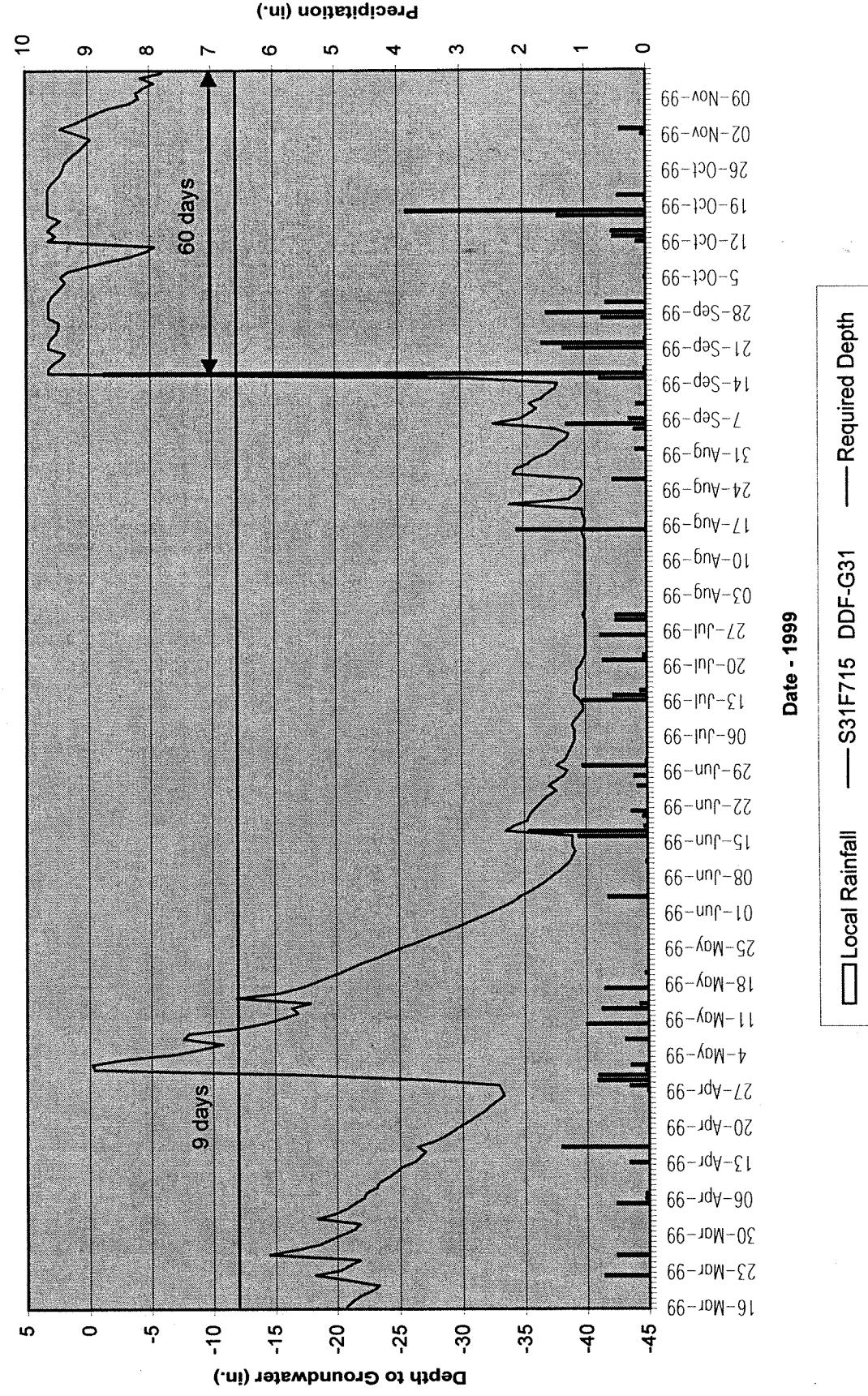
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G29



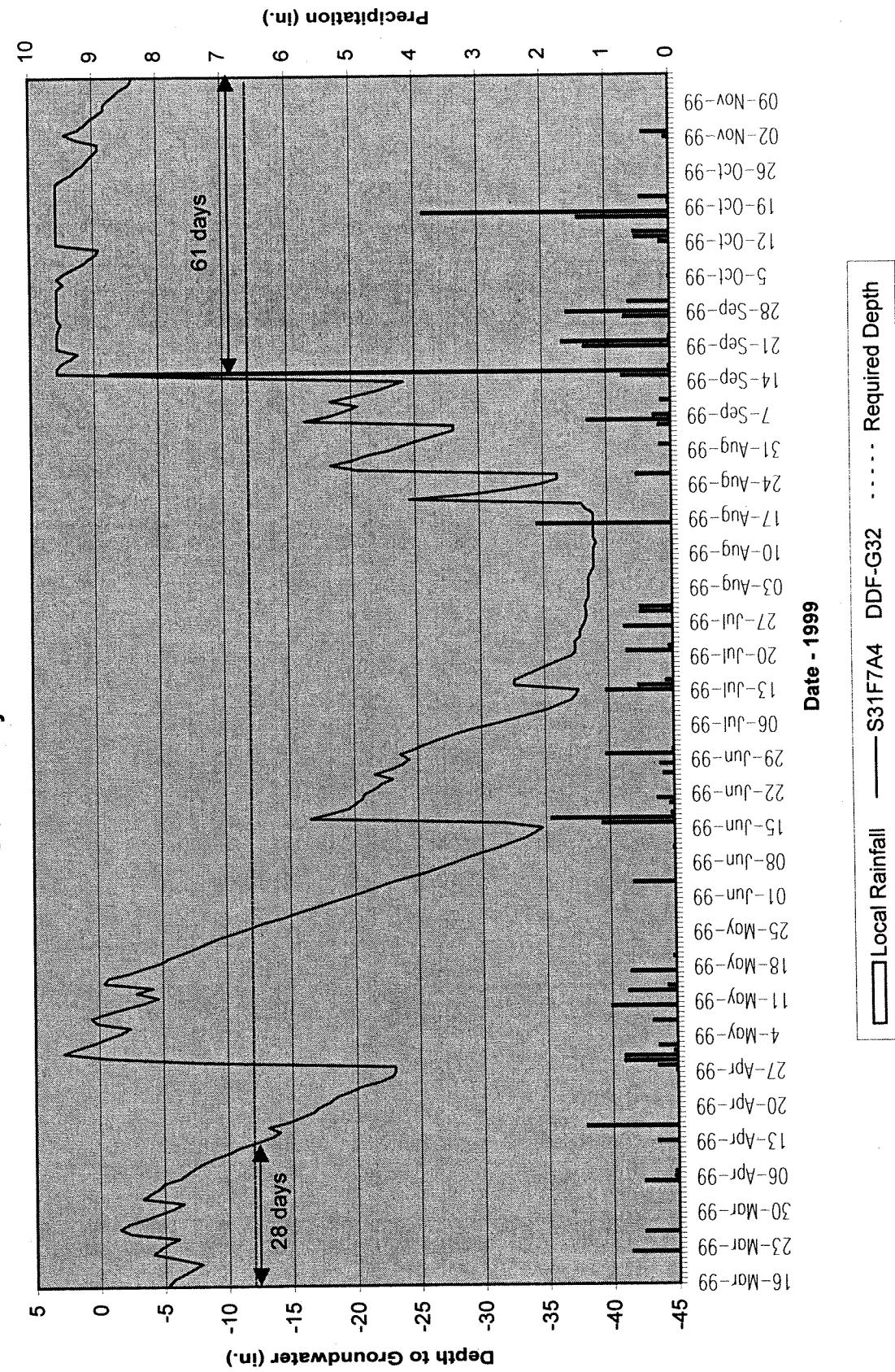
Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G30



Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G31



Dowd Dairy Farm - Well G32



APPENDIX B

SITE PHOTOS

DOWD DAIRY



Photo Point 1

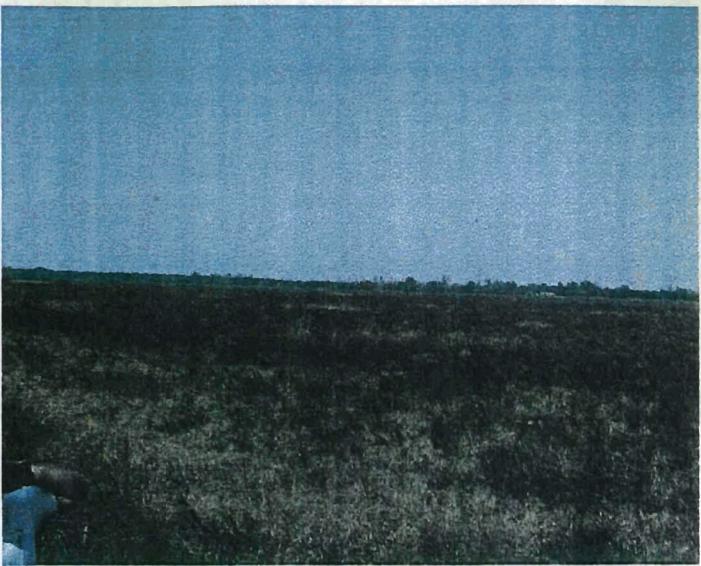


Photo Point 2

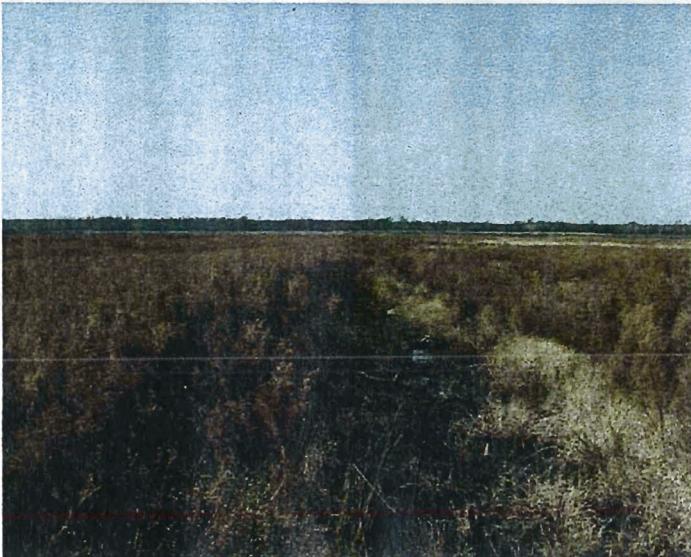


Photo Point 3

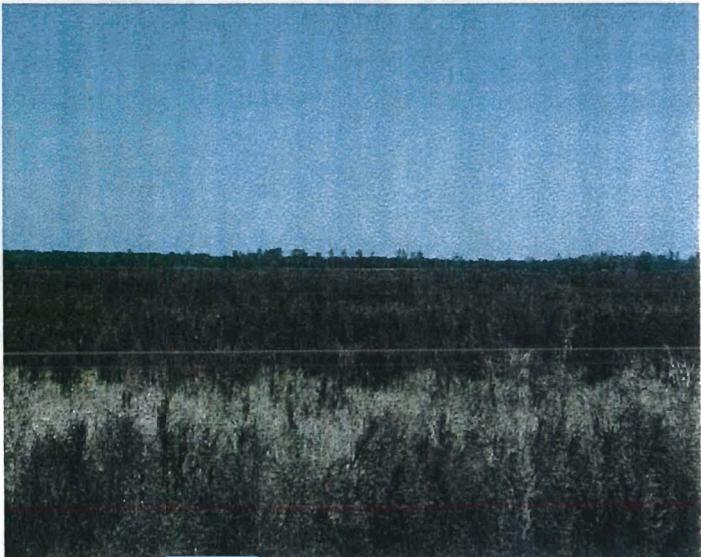


Photo Point 4



Photo Point 5



Photo Point 6

DOWD DAIRY



Photo Point 7

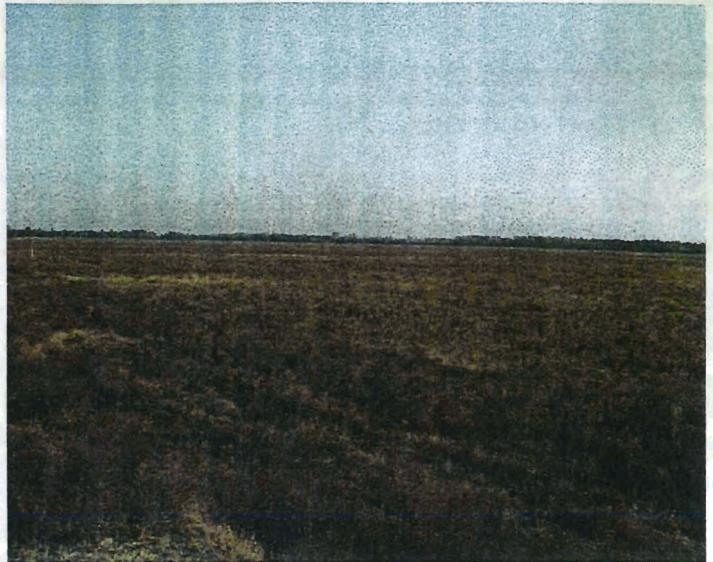


Photo Point 8



Photo Point 9



Photo Point 10



Photo Point 11

1999



Photo Point 12

APPENDIX C

PHOTO POINTS AND VEGETATION PLOTS

BLADEN COUNTY, NORTH CAROLINA
DOWD DAIRY FARM MITIGATION PLANTING PLAN PHASE I
PHOTO AND VEGETATION PLOT LOCATIONS

