

Sinking John Land's crusade

Our position: New evidence confirms that the Apopka mayor is courting disaster.

Apopka Mayor John Land's worst nightmare may have just been realized.

Dye tests conducted by independent researchers found a definite, if not circuitous, link between Apopka's Blue Sink and Rock Springs in the underground aquifer.

Ordinarily, the news would be little more than a scientific curiosity, a key piece in the complex jigsaw puzzle explaining how water flows in the state's underground caverns. Mr. Land, though, has been almost singularly focused in recent months on thwarting state efforts to protect those underground drinking-water resources in the area from overdevelopment and rampant land speculation.

Mr. Land, in fact, even tried to stop the testing, erroneously claiming that researchers lacked neces-

sary approvals.

Researchers, though, were able to obtain new evidence of how underground water travels near the Wekiva River basin area, more than 1,000 acres of which Mr. Land would annex and develop into new housing subdivisions. State officials properly worry that intense new development in that area could burden water resources while diminishing groundwater supplies that now percolate into the aquifer and nourish the basin.

In coming months, the researchers hope to conduct additional tests on the underground aquifer near Apopka, to shed even more light on how best to protect the region's drinking-water supplies from the ravages of urban sprawl.

Mr. Land — indeed all of Central Florida — should welcome the query and eagerly await the results.