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A native of Harrisburg, Illinois, Robert Holmes is the Director of the U.S. Geological Survey Illinois Water Science Center (USGS-IWSC) and an Adjunct Assistant Professor of Civil and Environmental Engineering at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. In his capacity as Director of the USGS-IWSC, Dr. Holmes manages and directs all USGS Water Resources field operations and research in Illinois. Before becoming Director in 1999, Dr. Holmes served in various positions in Missouri and Illinois with USGS including: staff hydrologist, Surface-Water Specialist, and Chief of the Hydrologic Data and Analysis Section. Dr. Holmes has taught undergraduate, graduate, and short courses in sediment transport, open-channel hydraulics, water availability, and field data collection techniques.

Dr. Holmes has research interests in the areas of geomorphology, surface-water hydrologic processes, river hydraulics, sediment transport, and stream restoration. He has authored or co-authored numerous papers and reports on these topics.

Dr. Holmes has BS and MS degrees in Civil Engineering from the University of Missouri-Rolla, and a PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is a licensed professional engineer in Illinois and Missouri and holds memberships in Sigma Xi Research Society, the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE), the American Geophysical Union, the International Hydrological Science Association, and the Illinois Association of Floodplain and Stormwater Managers. Dr. Holmes has and is serving on numerous science advisory committees including the Illinois River Coordinating Council, Salt Fork Watershed Technical Advisory Group, Illinois River Science Advisory Council, Illinois State Water Plan Task Force, Illinois Drought Response Task Force, Corps of Engineers Illinois River Basin Restoration Study Steering Committee, and the USGS Representative to National Research Council Workshop on Stream Restoration. Dr. Holmes has served as President of the Mid-Missouri Section of ASCE and Water Master for the Champaign-Urbana Hydraulic Engineering Luncheon Series and has received the Department of the Interior's Superior Service Award.