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Sommario/riassunto

Scientific understanding of fluid flow in rock fractures--a process underlying contemporary earth science problems from the search for petroleum to the controversy over nuclear waste storage--has grown significantly in the past 20 years. This volume presents a comprehensive report on the state of the field, with an interdisciplinary viewpoint, case studies of fracture sites, illustrations, conclusions, and research recommendations. The book addresses these questions: How can fractures that are significant hydraulic conductors be identified, located, and characterized? How do flow and transport occur in fracture systems? How can changes in fracture systems be predicted and controlled? Among other topics, the committee provides a geomechanical understanding of fracture formation, reviews methods for detecting subsurface fractures, and looks at the use of hydraulic and tracer tests to investigate fluid flow. The volume examines the state of conceptual and mathematical modeling, and it provides a useful framework for understanding the complexity of fracture changes that occur during fluid pumping and other engineering practices. With a practical and multidisciplinary outlook, this volume will be welcomed by geologists, petroleum geologists, geoengineers, geophysicists, hydrologists, researchers, educators and students in these fields, and public officials involved in geological projects.

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