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## Technical Memorandum

**To:** GSA Managers  
**From:** Davids Engineering and Woodard & Curran  
**Date:** May 28, 2021  
**Subject:** **Butte Subbasin DRAFT Projected Hydrographs Relative to Minimum Thresholds and Measurable Objectives**

### Introduction and Purpose

As part of formulating and evaluating Butte Subbasin Groundwater Sustainability Plan Minimum Thresholds (MTs) and Measurable Objectives (MOs), the Butte Basin Groundwater Model (BBGM) integrated hydrologic model (model) was used to evaluate groundwater levels that could occur in the future. In each of the three proposed monitoring well networks (shallow, deep and interconnected surface waters), simulated groundwater level hydrographs were prepared for each monitoring well location and compared to draft MTs developed for each well. The purpose was to understand the historical and projected future conditions under the 2070 central climate change scenario with respect to MTs and MOs. The 2070 climate change projected future condition represents a future condition with climate change impacts but without projects and management actions for review of MTs and MOs.

This Technical Memorandum briefly describes the model scenario and describes the criteria used to establish draft MTs and MOs. It also provides some initial observations to guide interpretation of the hydrographs.

### Model Scenarios

Model runs were made for the scenarios listed below. The model operates on a daily time step.

- 1) Historical (2000-2018)
- 2) Current Conditions (2019-2068)
- 3) Future Conditions without Climate Change (2019-2068)
- 4) Future Conditions with 2030 Climate Change (2019-2068)
- 5) Future Conditions with 2070 Climate Change (2019-2068)

Model Scenarios 2 through 5 use 1971-2018 and add 2004-2005 as a basis for the hydrology (i.e. precipitation, streamflow) inputs for a 50 year scenario run. The climate change scenarios adjust the historical hydrology to reflect changes in timing and magnitude of runoff due to climate change based on the climate change guidance provided by DWR.

Hydrographs for the future conditions with 2070 climate change and the historical measured groundwater levels were plotted on one chart for each of the monitoring well locations (i.e. the chart includes the 2000 through 2018 historical run and 2019 through 2068 projected future run). The charts

show simulated groundwater elevations on the left vertical axis and groundwater depths below ground surface (bgs) on the right vertical axis. Ground surface elevation is also plotted along with the elevation and depth bgs of the draft MT and MO. The charts are organized by monitoring network beginning with the shallow, followed by the deep and interconnected surface water networks and included as attachments to this TM.

Projected future water levels from the model run are a line plot of the monthly values averaged from the daily results. The projected future water levels have been adjusted on the graphs at wells where the historical measurements were offset from the model results. This is an accepted modeling practice and it is noted on the hydrographs when such an adjustment has been made.

## Undesirable Results

Groundwater levels are recommended as the sustainability metric for the chronic decline of groundwater levels and as a proxy for storage and the depletion of interconnected surface water. The undesirable results statement proposed for these three sustainability indicators and related considerations in setting minimum thresholds (MTs) are provided below.

### *Level*

The undesirable result for the chronic lowering of groundwater levels is a result that would cause significant and unreasonable reduction in the long-term viability of Beneficial Uses and Users over the planning and implementation horizon of this GSP.

Chronic decline of groundwater levels can impact beneficial uses and users in three primary ways:

1. Cause domestic wells to go dry
2. Impact the health of vegetation in Groundwater Dependent Ecosystems (GDEs), and
3. Impact the conjunctive use of groundwater for agricultural production.

To protect the beneficial use by domestic wells, groundwater levels need to remain higher than the bottom depth of domestic wells. After reviewing one set of hydrographs, the Butte Advisory Board (BAB) suggested an MT that would protect 93% of the domestic wells. This is described as an MT calculation method to determine the shallowest 7<sup>th</sup> percentile of domestic well depths. To protect the health of vegetation in GDEs, shallow monitoring wells will be installed in GDEs to allow the MTs outside of GDEs to be set without regard to the GDE criteria, so the MTs in this set of hydrographs do NOT consider the GDE criteria. Protecting the conjunctive use of groundwater for agricultural production requires MTs that allow the groundwater level to be lower during droughts, when groundwater pumping increases to augment reduced surface water availability. Depending on the depths of domestic wells, the need for lower levels during droughts could cause some domestic wells to go dry if the MTs are set based on the conjunctive use beneficial use. Conversely, setting MTs based solely on domestic well depths may impact the ability of agricultural beneficial users to pump groundwater during droughts. Local stakeholders must agree on a balance between these two beneficial uses.

In the shallow and deep monitoring networks, the MT was calculated based on the shallowest of the following criteria:

- 1) Shallowest 7<sup>th</sup> percentile of domestic well depths to protect at least 93% of the domestic wells in DWR's well completion database, and
- 2) 100% of historical range to protect conjunctive use of groundwater.

Undesirable Results (UR) Detection = 25% fall below the minimum threshold for 24 consecutive months (i.e. 11 of 41 wells in shallow aquifer representative monitoring network, 3 of 12 wells in deep aquifer representative monitoring wells))

### ***Storage***

The undesirable result for the reduction of groundwater in storage is a result that would cause significant and unreasonable reduction in the long-term viability of Beneficial Uses and Users over the planning and implementation horizon of this GSP.

The MT determined for levels is expected to be sufficiently protective of the groundwater storage sustainability criteria.

### ***Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water***

The undesirable result for depletions of interconnected surface water is a result that causes significant and unreasonable adverse effects on Beneficial Uses and Users of interconnected surface water within the Butte Subbasin over the planning and implementation horizon of this GSP.

Monitoring wells screened to monitor shallow water levels and at more than 2,000 but less than 7,280 feet from major streams are selected to monitor interconnected surface water. MTs for these wells are a set 10 feet below the minimum measured historic level.

UR Detection = 25% fall below the minimum threshold for 24 consecutive months (3 of 12 representative monitoring wells); this is the same rationale as for lowering of groundwater levels.

### **Minimum Thresholds**

The MTs plotted on the charts are based on parameters and criteria that have been presented to the GSA Managers at recent meetings. The MTs elevations for each monitoring well are equal to the most shallow of:

- **Agricultural beneficial use criteria (conjunctive use):** The lowest historical groundwater elevation well minus the maximum of 20 feet or 100% of the historical range in groundwater elevation.
- **Domestic well beneficial use criteria (protect 93% of domestic wells):** The elevation corresponding to the domestic well depth that protects 93% of the domestic wells in the Thiessen polygon around each monitoring well.
- **Environmental beneficial use (GDE vegetation root depth):** Do not consider the GDE criteria. Install shallow monitoring wells in GDEs.
- **Maximum measured depth to groundwater:** Selected if this value was deeper than the shallower of the agricultural or the domestic well beneficial use criteria.
- **Depletion of Interconnected Surface Water:** The elevation corresponding to 10 feet below the minimum measured historic level.

Using the shallowest of the criteria ensures that most limiting beneficial use is protected. Local stakeholders may agree on a different balance between beneficial uses. For example, some critically overdrafted basins have set MTs based on the agricultural beneficial use criteria and are developing a program to assist domestic well owners whose wells go dry.

## Measurable Objectives

The MOs plotted on the charts are the average of the most recent five years of elevations available at each well. The MO is not a running average and will not be not changed over time in response to additional monitoring results.

## Initial Observations and Comments

The following initial observations and comments are provided to guide interpretation of the hydrographs:


- 1) The MTs plotted on the shallow and deep monitoring network charts are recommended by the technical team for the groundwater level and storage sustainability indicators. The MTs plotted on the streamflow depletion monitoring network charts are recommended by the technical team for the streamflow depletion sustainability indicator.
- 2) For some locations where groundwater levels are very shallow, modeled groundwater levels are sometimes above the ground surface. This condition can exist in a pressurized aquifer system and one very deep well in the subbasin is known to have water levels above ground. This condition can also result from the inherent uncertainty involved with representing complex physical systems with mathematical models.
- 3) None of the wells have persistent (longer than 3 years) MT exceedances.
- 4) Two of the wells in the shallow monitoring network have short periods between 2025 and 2070 of projected future water levels at or within a foot or two of the recommended MTs.
- 5) The technical team has suggested that the Undesirable Result for groundwater levels be based on 25% of the shallow and deep monitoring wells (11 and 3 wells, respectively) exceeding their MT for a 2-year consecutive period. Based on this definition, the exceedances occurring at the shallow monitoring wells described above would not constitute an Undesirable Result.

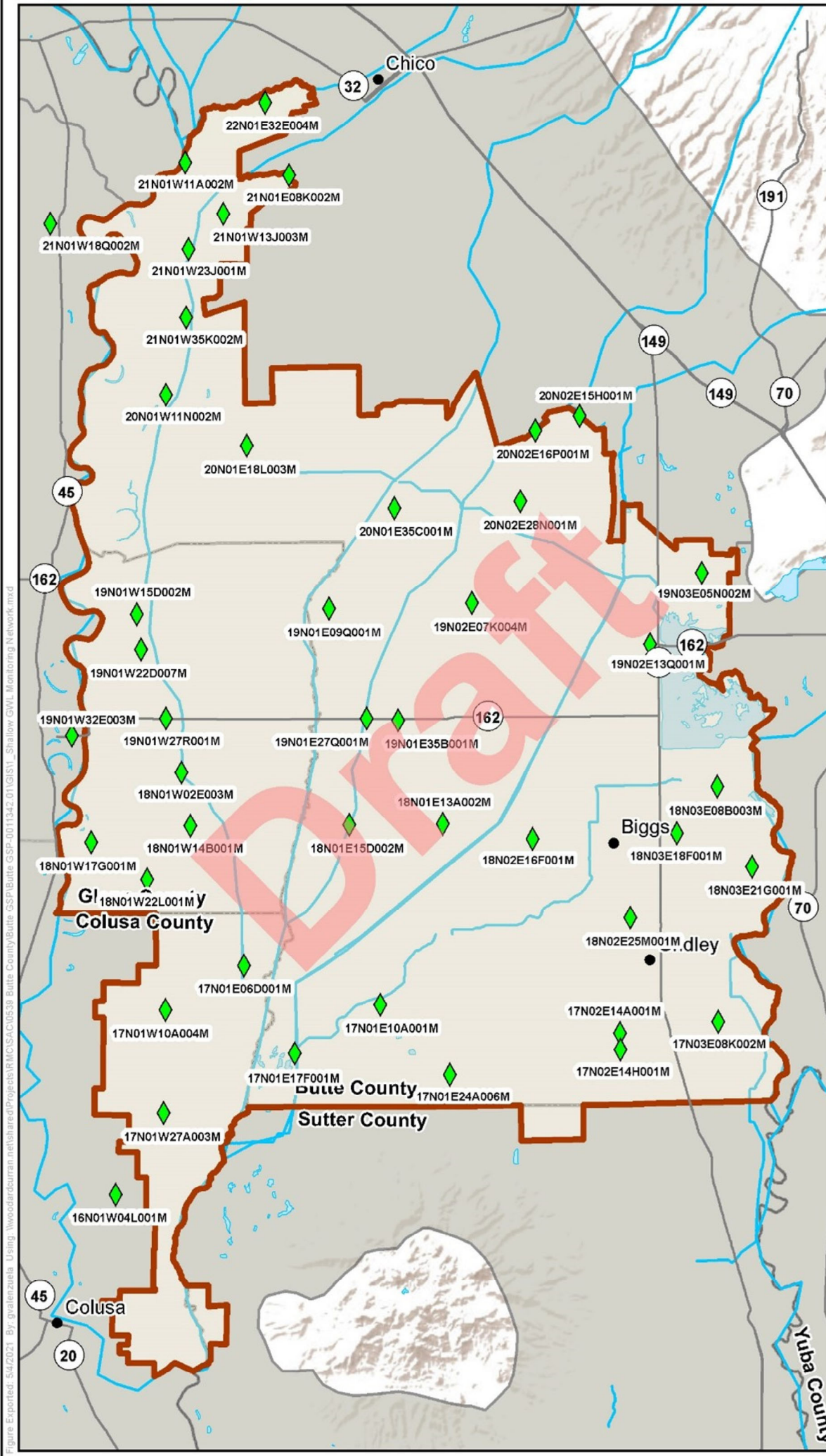


# Shallow Groundwater Levels Monitoring Network

Butte Subbasin GSP



-  Shallow Monitoring Network Well
-  Cities
-  Canals
-  State Highways
-  Butte Subbasin
-  Counties
-  Neighboring Subbasins
-  Lake



Map Created: May 2021

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Figure Exported: 5/4/2021 By: gmalenka Using: \\woodardcurran.net\shared\Projects\BMC\54\0538 - Butte County\Butte\_GSP\0111442\_01\GIS\1\_Shallow\_GWL\_Monitoring\_Network.mxd

# Minimum Thresholds (Shallow GWLr) Representative Monitoring Network

Butte Subbasin GSP



- Cities
- Canals
- State Highways
- ▭ Butte Subbasin
- ▭ Counties
- ▭ Neighboring Subbasins
- ▭ Lake

## Methodology

- ◆ 100% Historical Range
- ◆ Measured Historical Low
- ◆ Shallowest 7th Percentile of Domestic Well Depths
- ## Minimum Thresholds (ft. bgs)

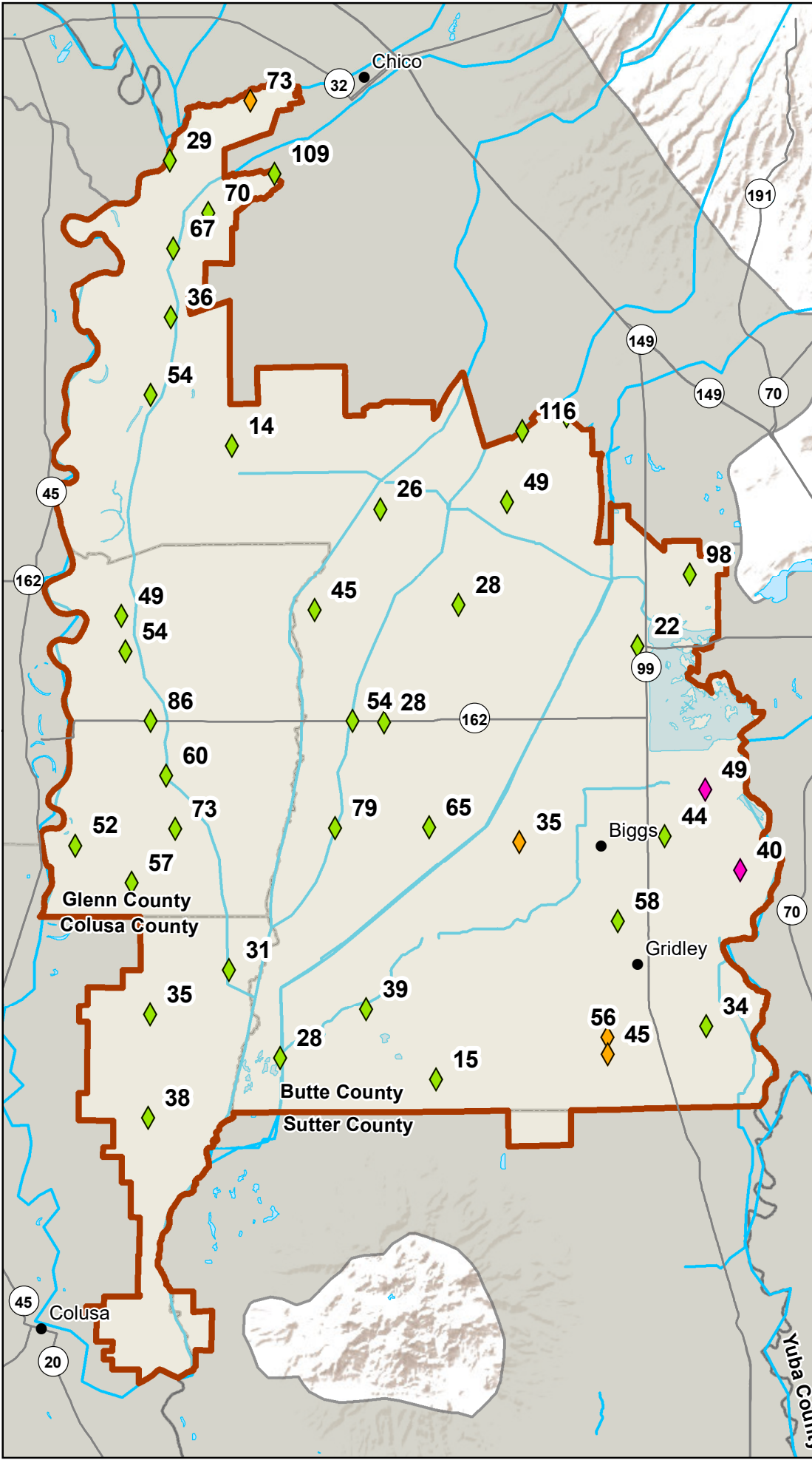
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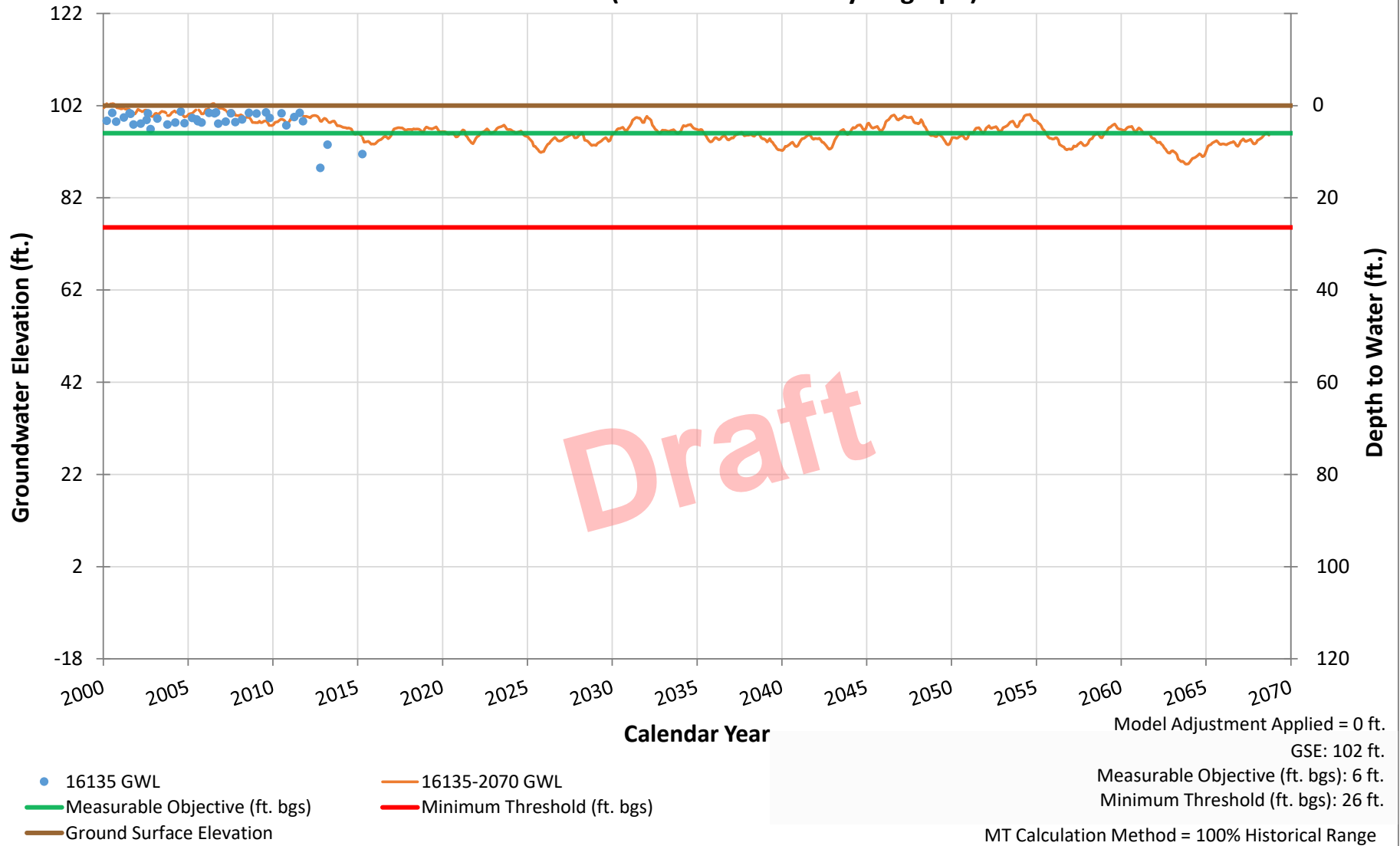
Map Created: May 2021

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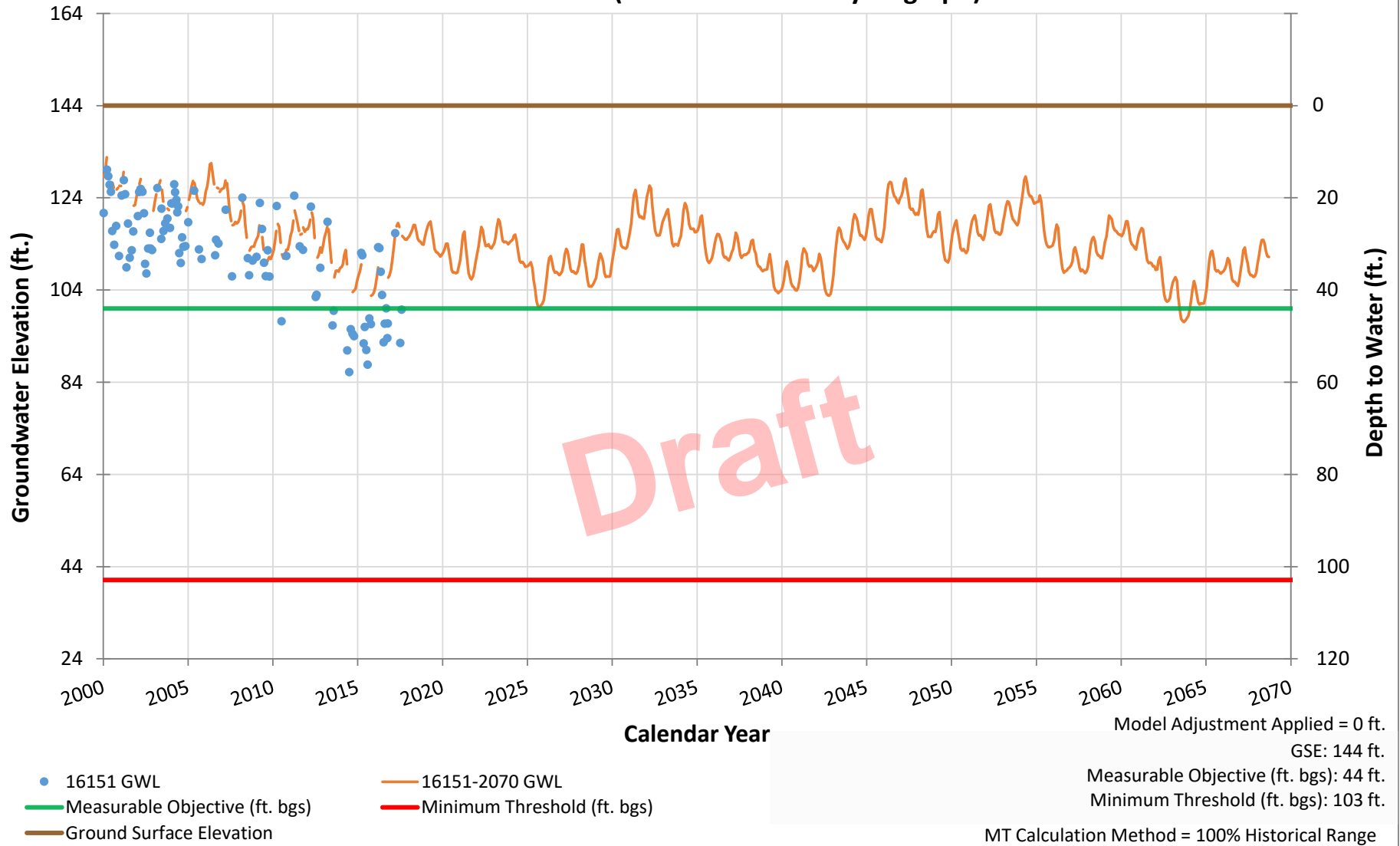
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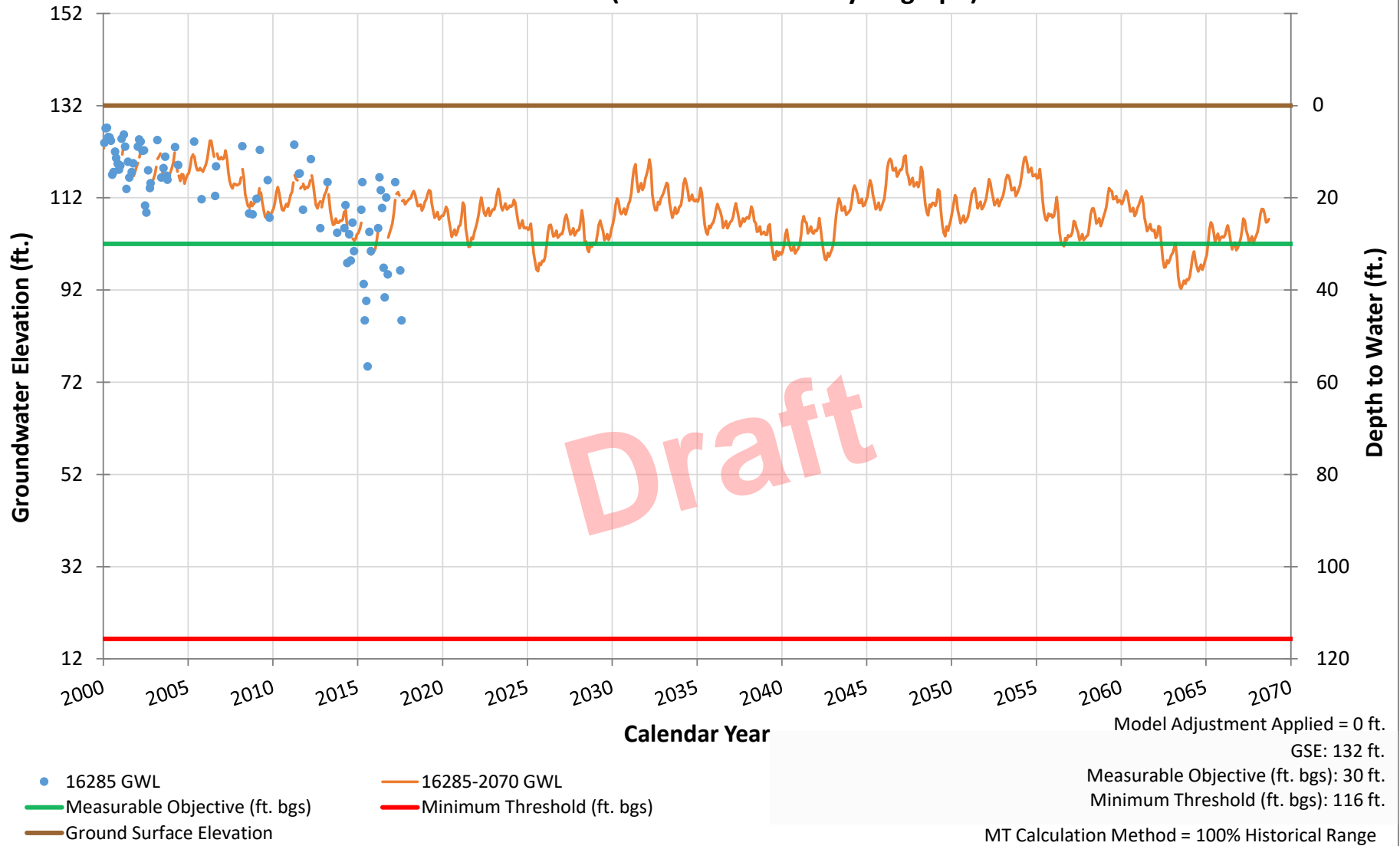
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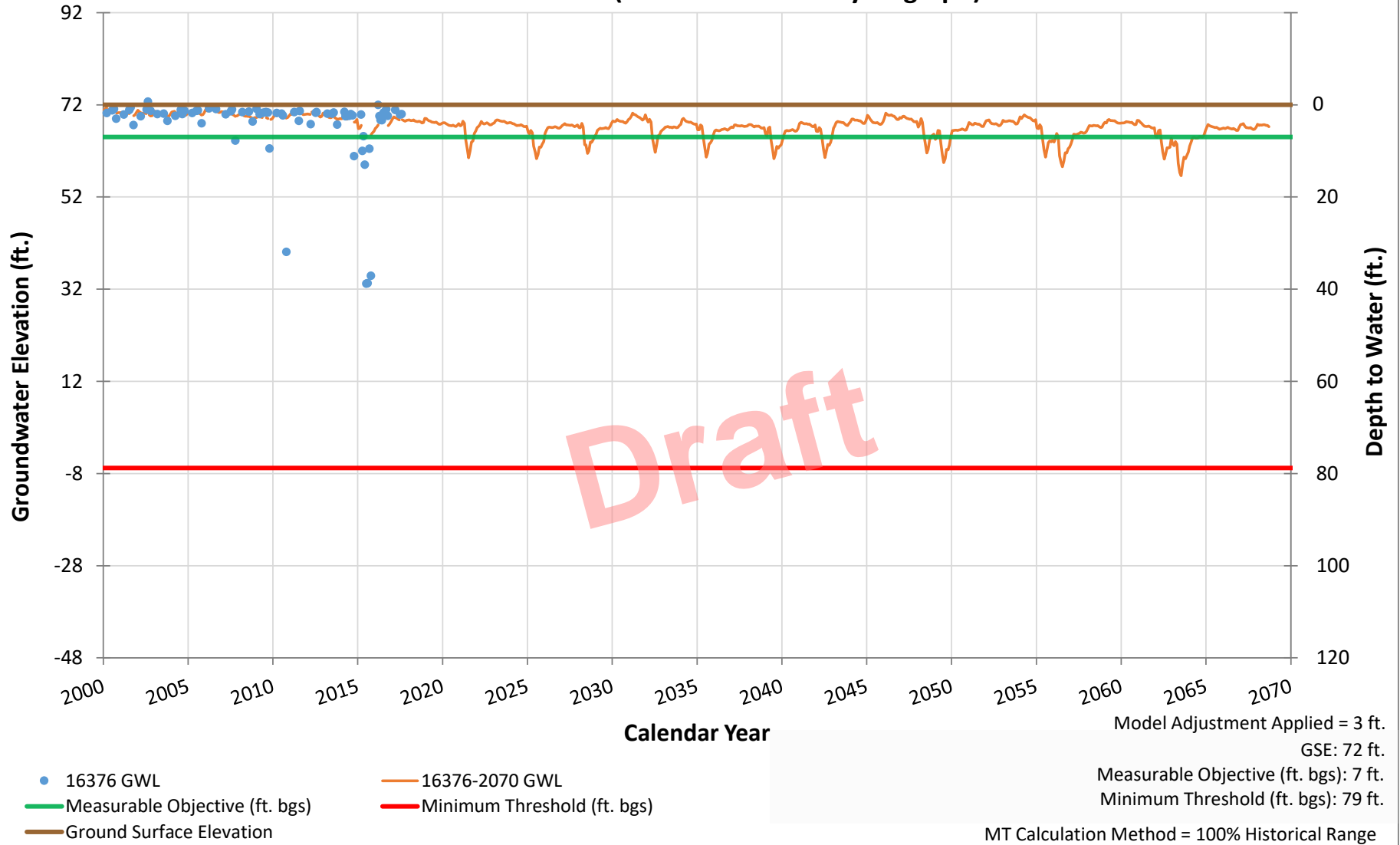


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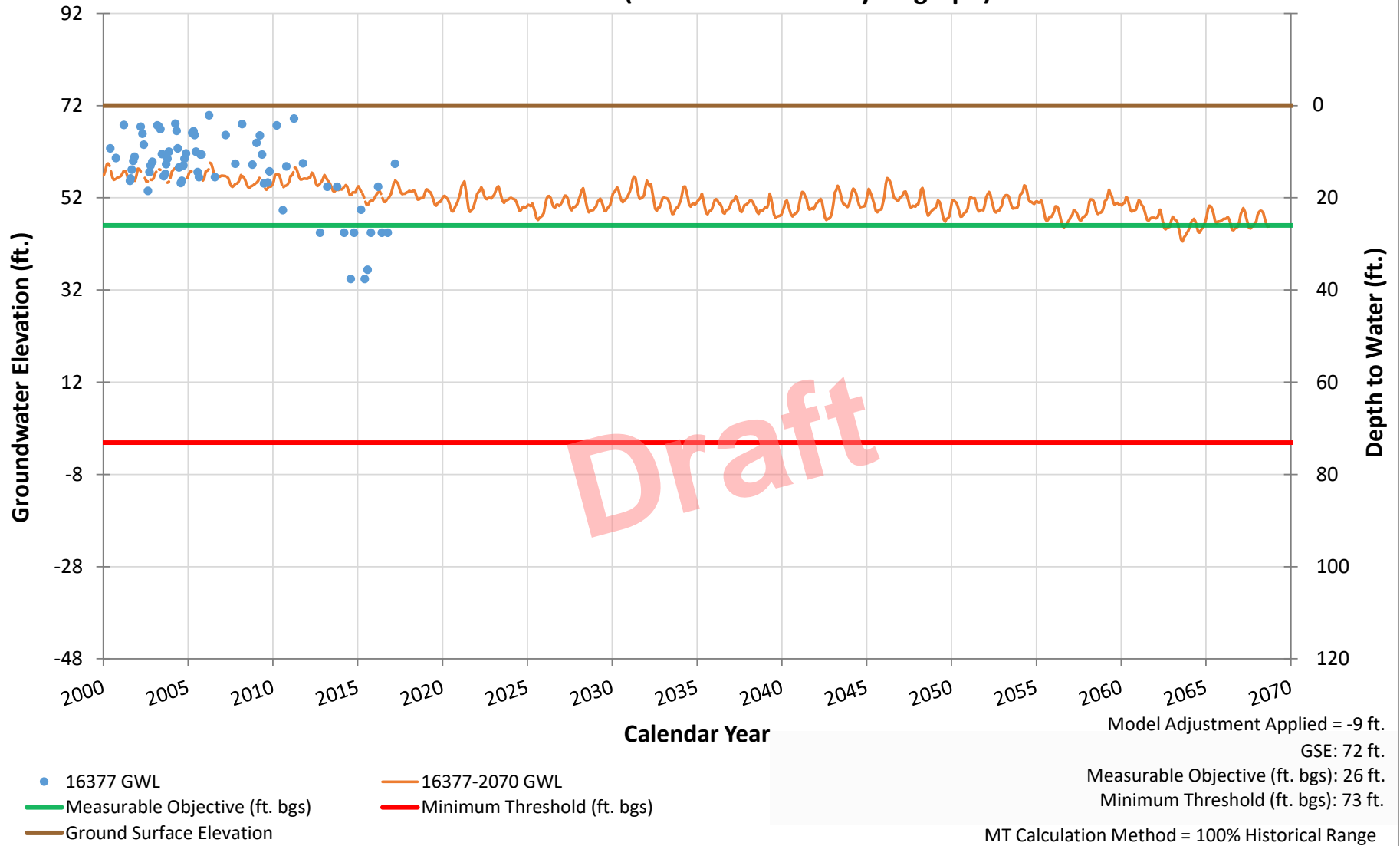




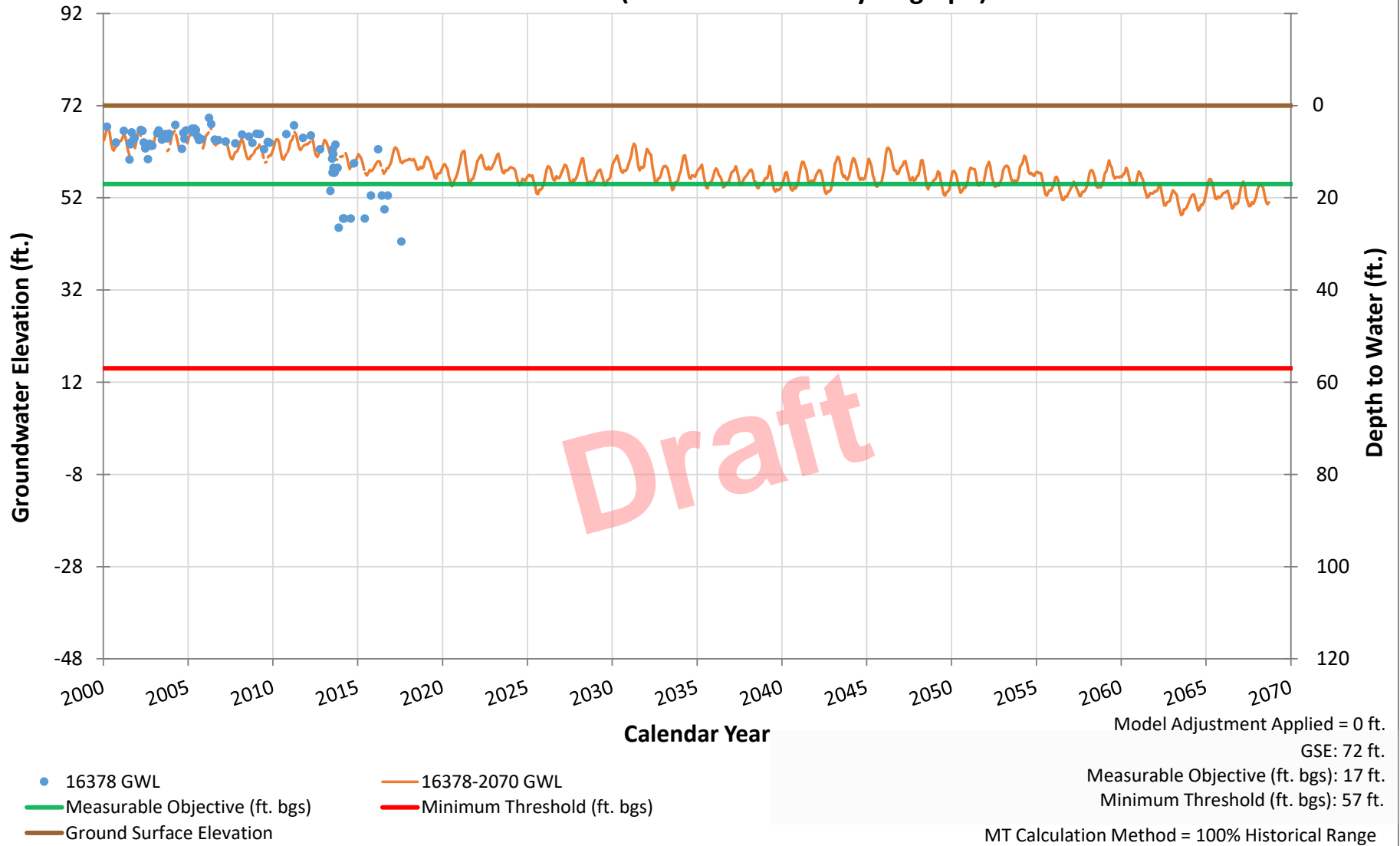
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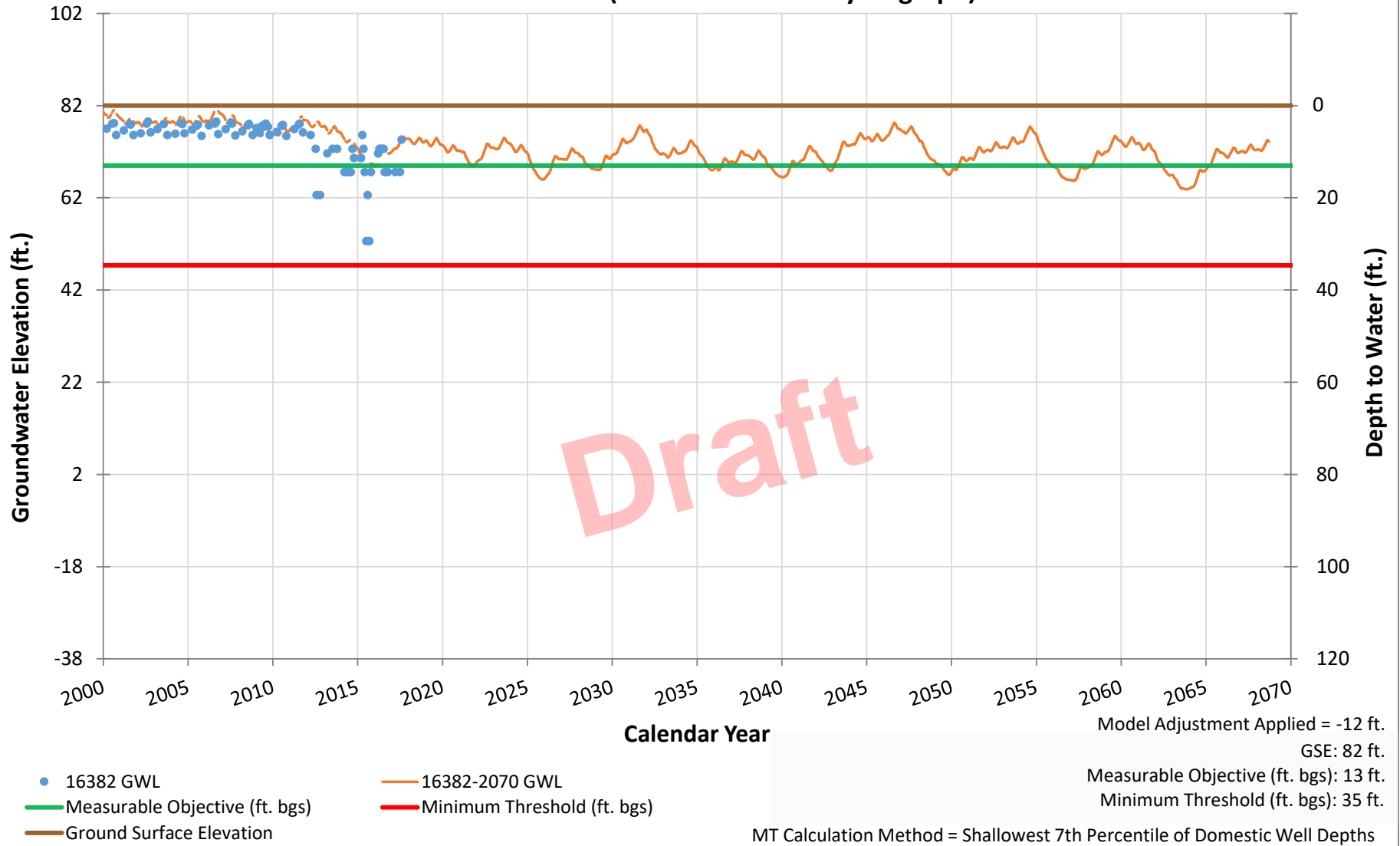


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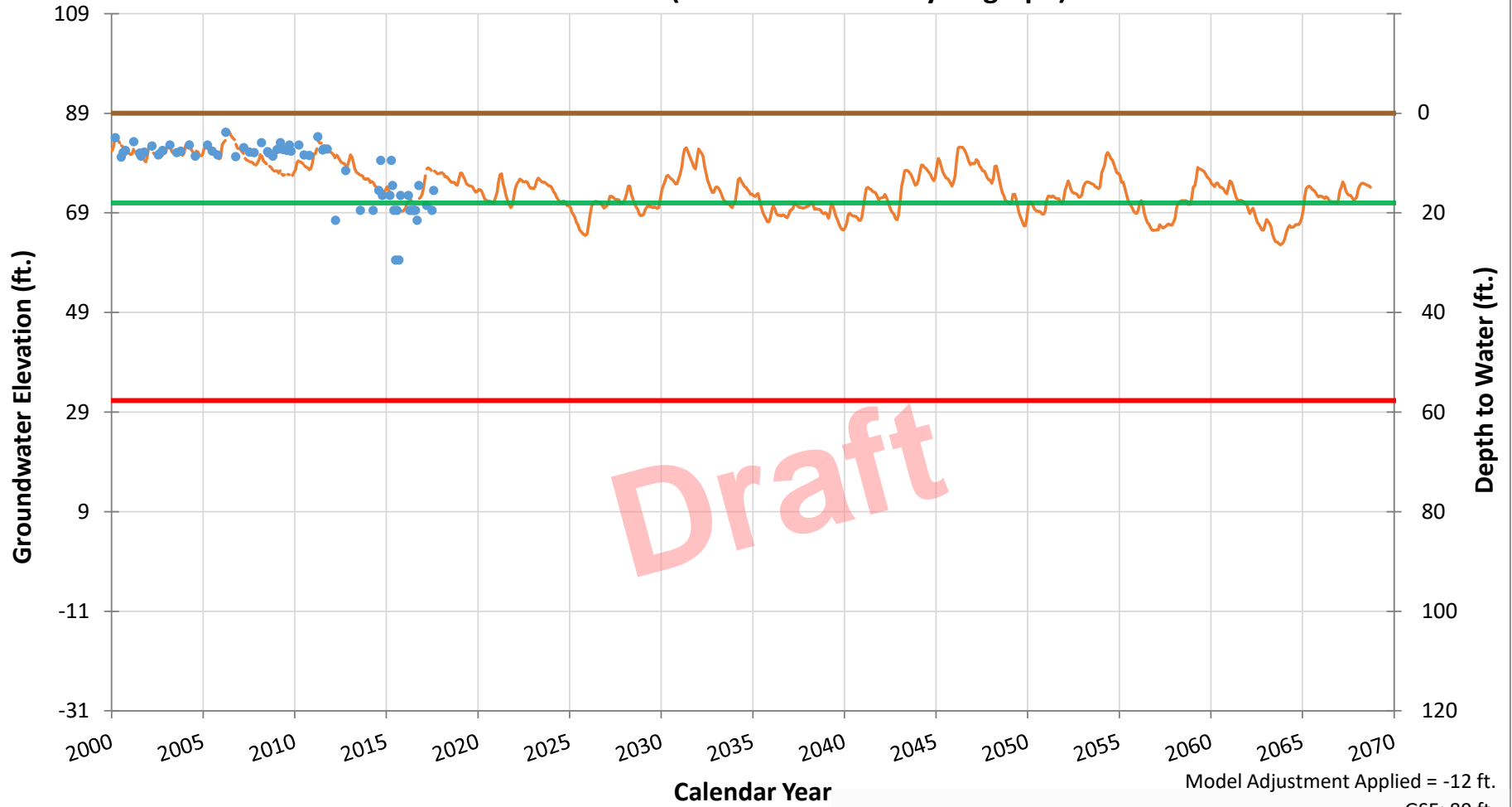




### SWN 18N02E16F001M (CASGEM - 16382 Hydrograph)



### SWN 18N02E25M001M (CASGEM - 16383 Hydrograph)



Draft

- 16383 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation
- 16383-2070 GWL
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)

Model Adjustment Applied = -12 ft.  
 GSE: 89 ft.  
 Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 18 ft.  
 Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 58 ft.  
 MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 18N03E18F001M (CASGEM - 16916 Hydrograph)

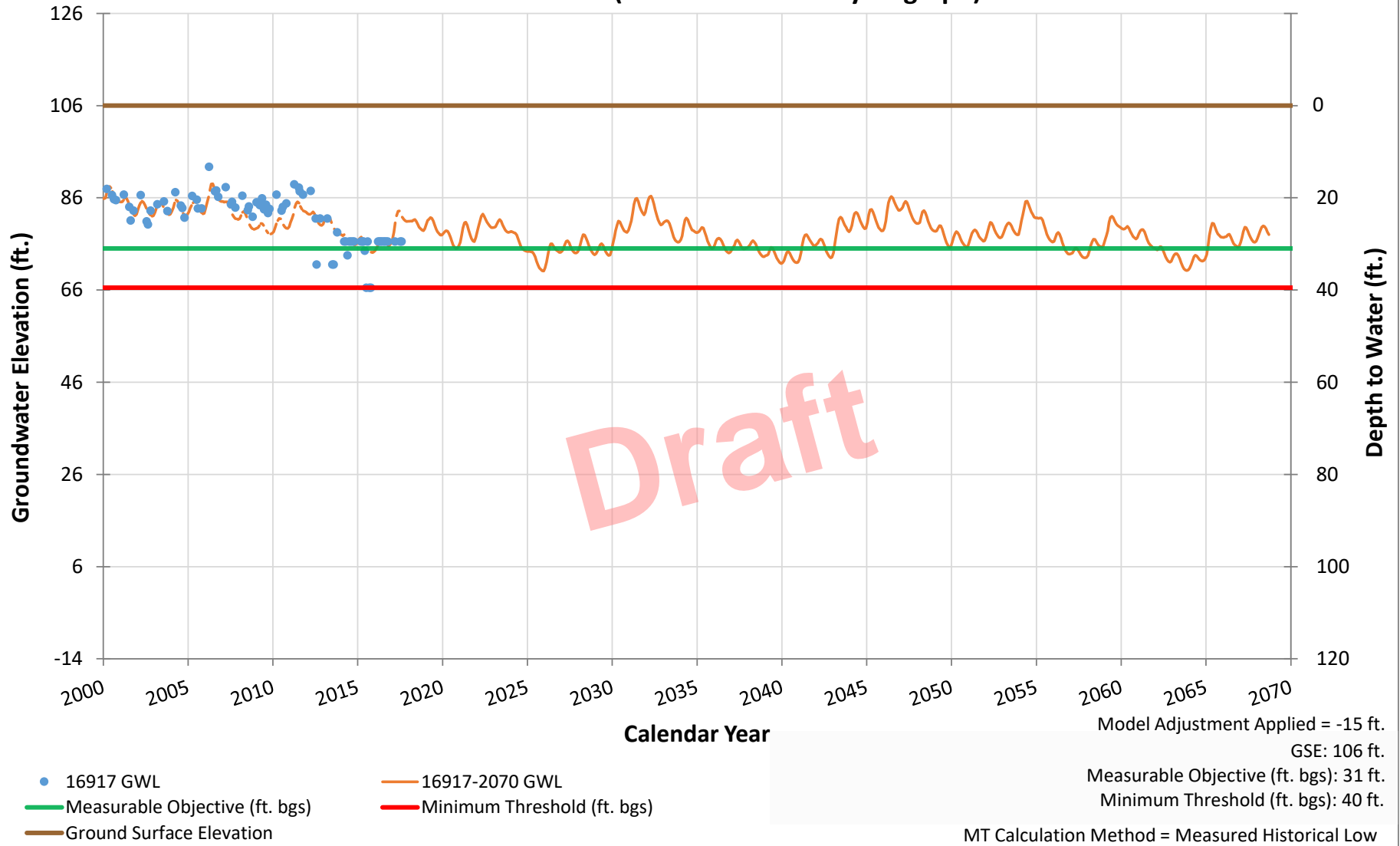


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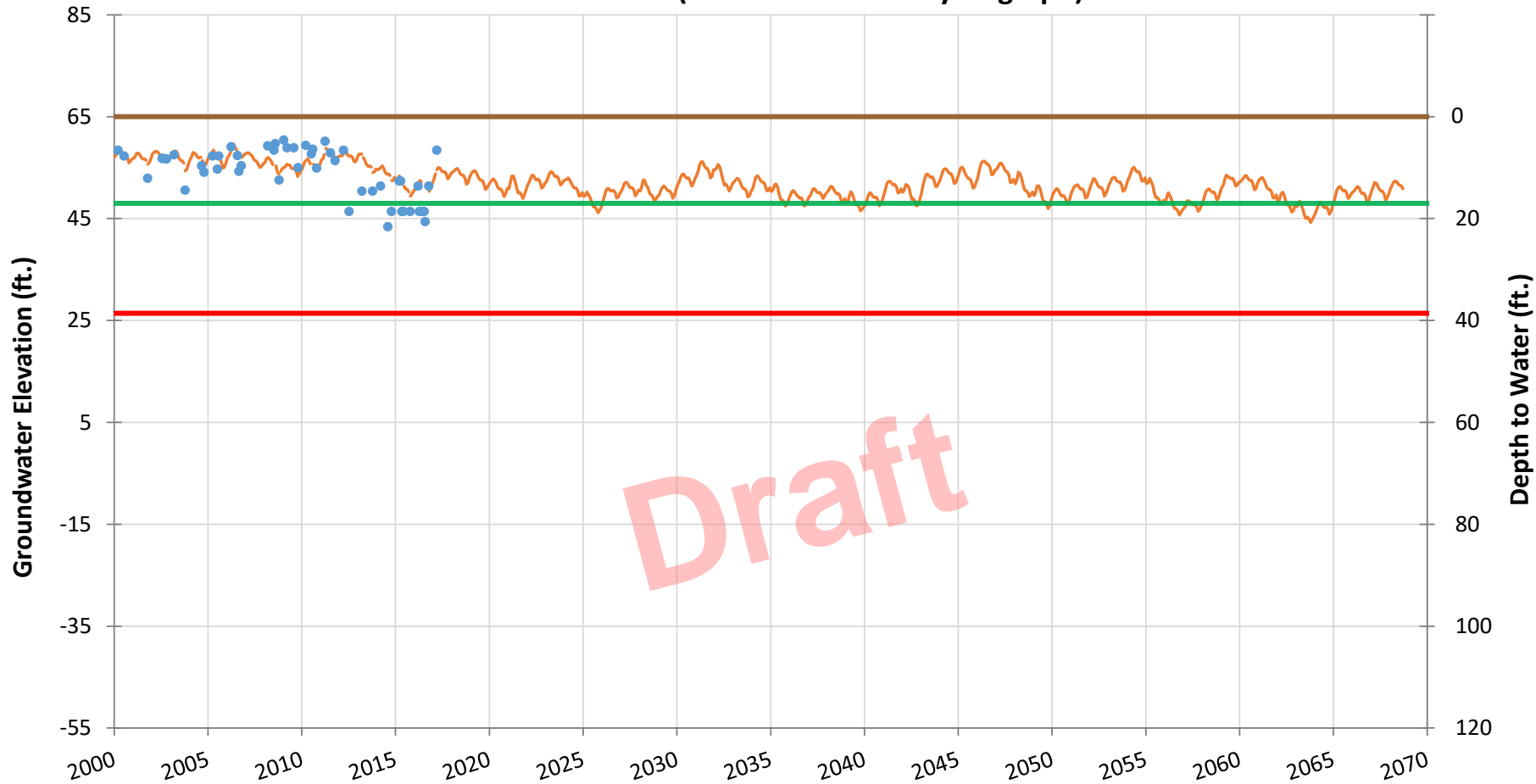
- 16916 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation
- 16916-2070 GWL
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)

Model Adjustment Applied = -20 ft.  
 GSE: 100 ft.  
 Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 14 ft.  
 Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 44 ft.  
 MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 18N03E21G001M (CASGEM - 16917 Hydrograph)



### SWN 17N01E10A001M (CASGEM - 16951 Hydrograph)

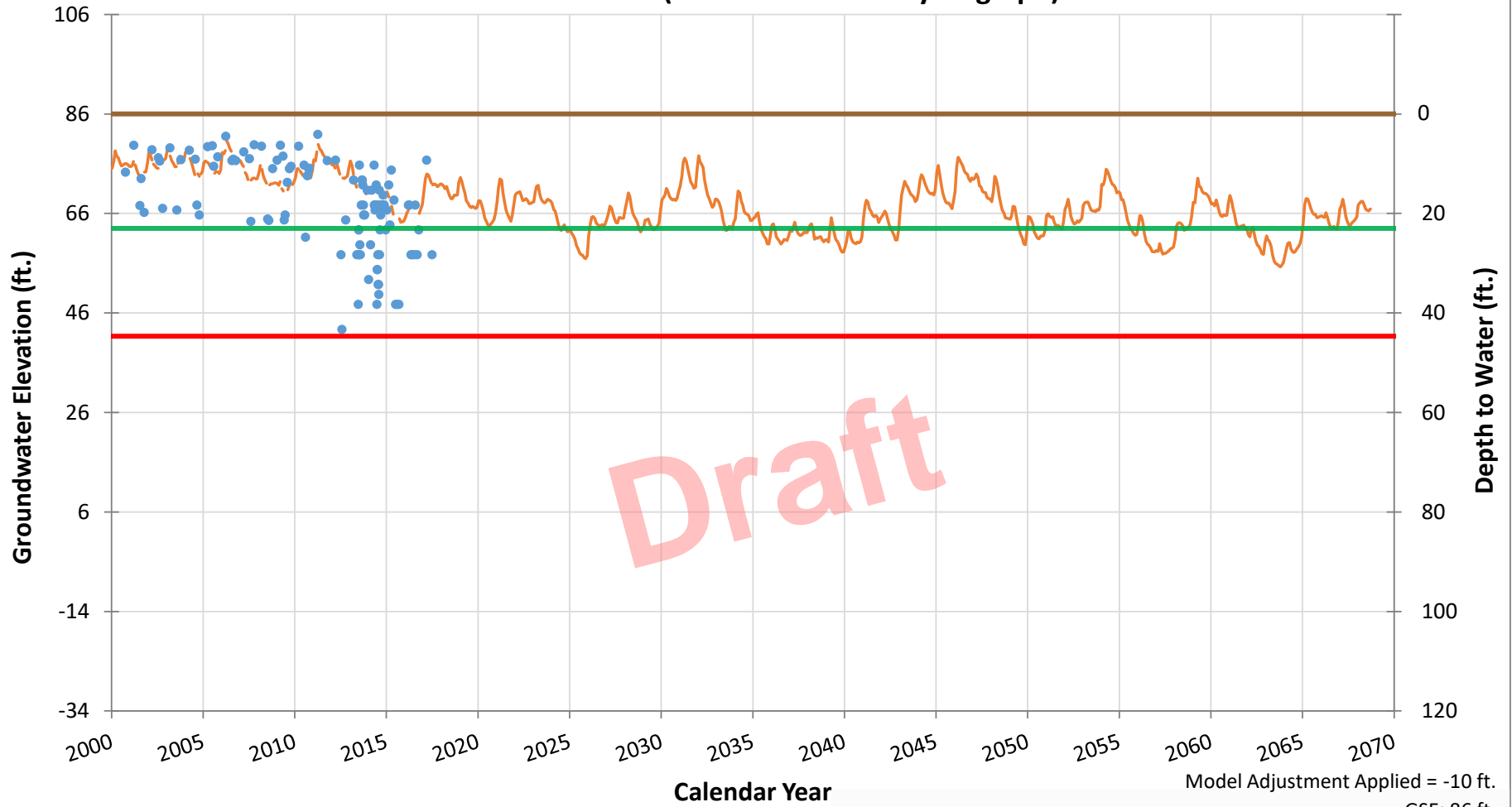


Draft

- 16951 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation
- 16951-2070 GWL
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)

Model Adjustment Applied = -10 ft.  
 GSE: 65 ft.  
 Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 17 ft.  
 Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 39 ft.  
 MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 17N02E14H001M (CASGEM - 16956 Hydrograph)

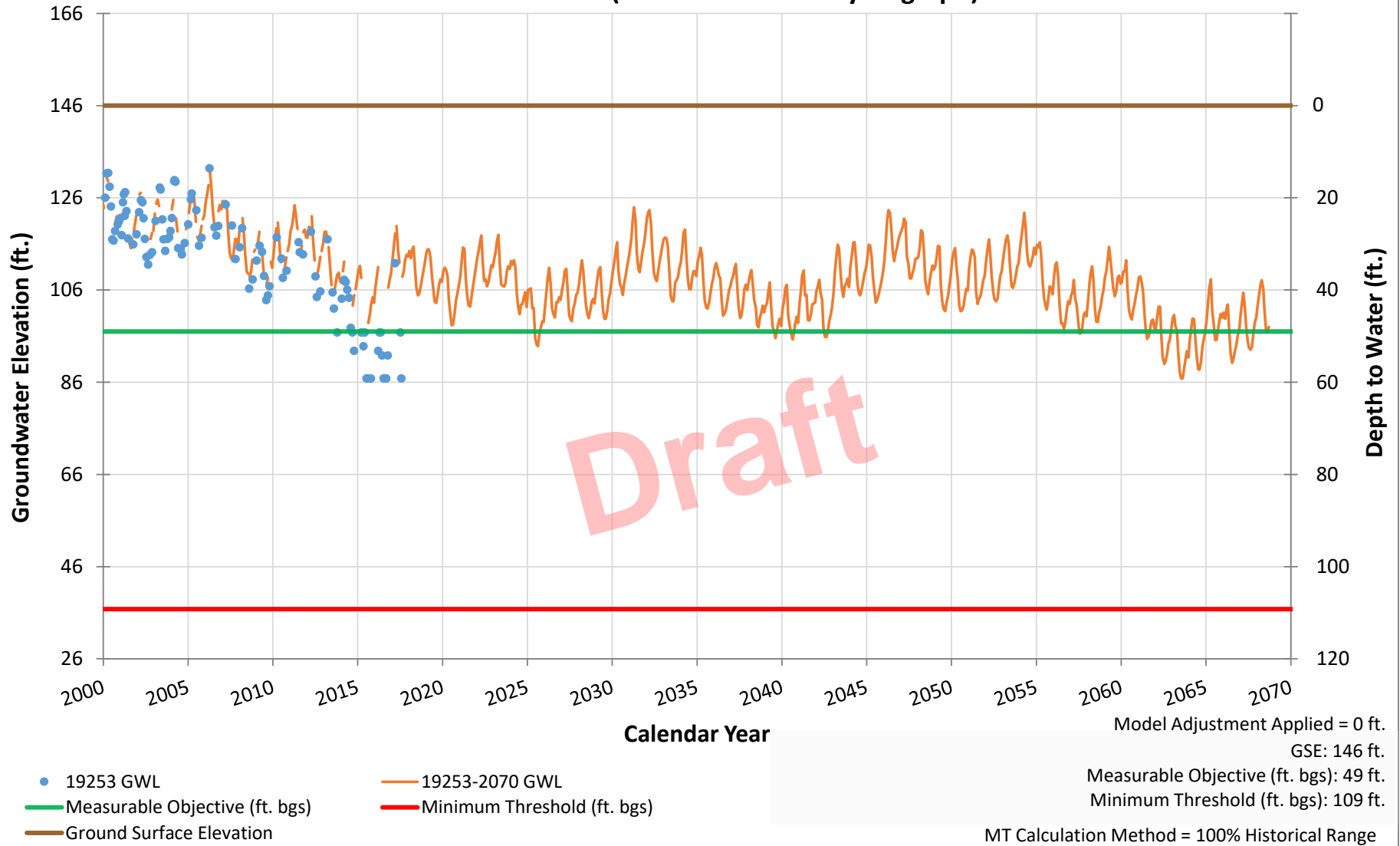


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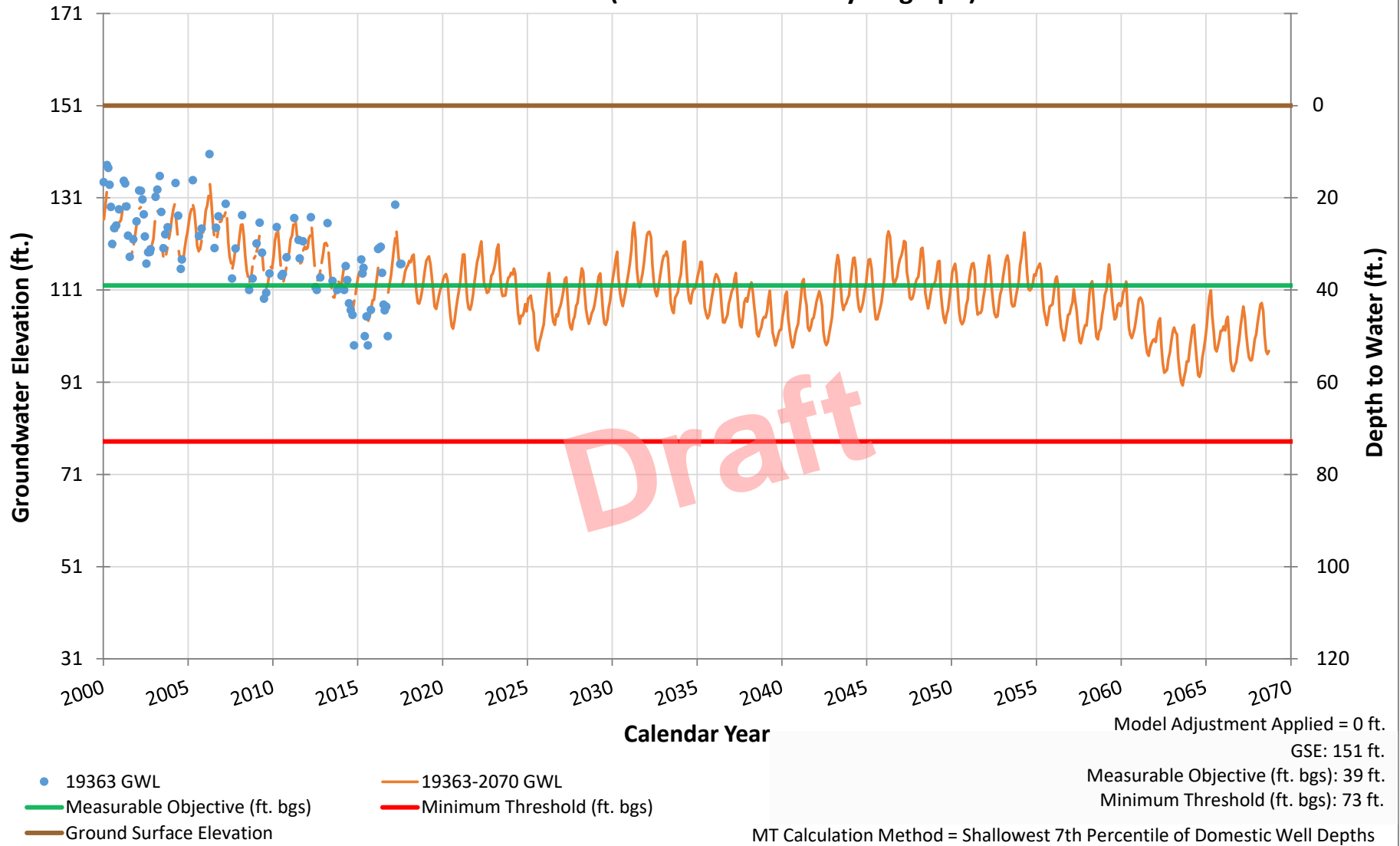
- 16956 GWL
- 16956-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

Model Adjustment Applied = -10 ft.  
GSE: 86 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 23 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 45 ft.  
MT Calculation Method = Shallowest 7th Percentile of Domestic Well Depths

### SWN 21N01E08K002M (CASGEM - 19253 Hydrograph)

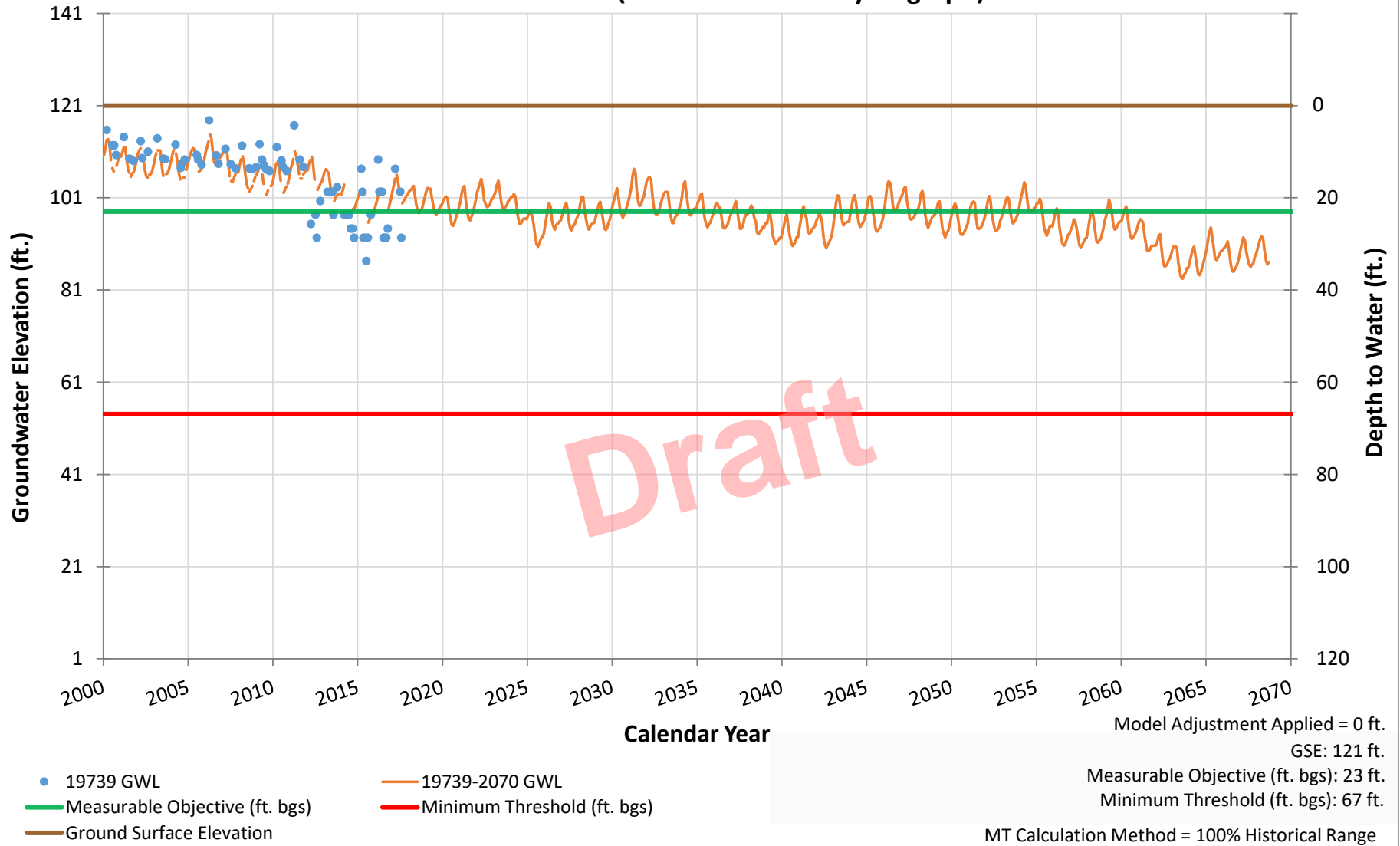


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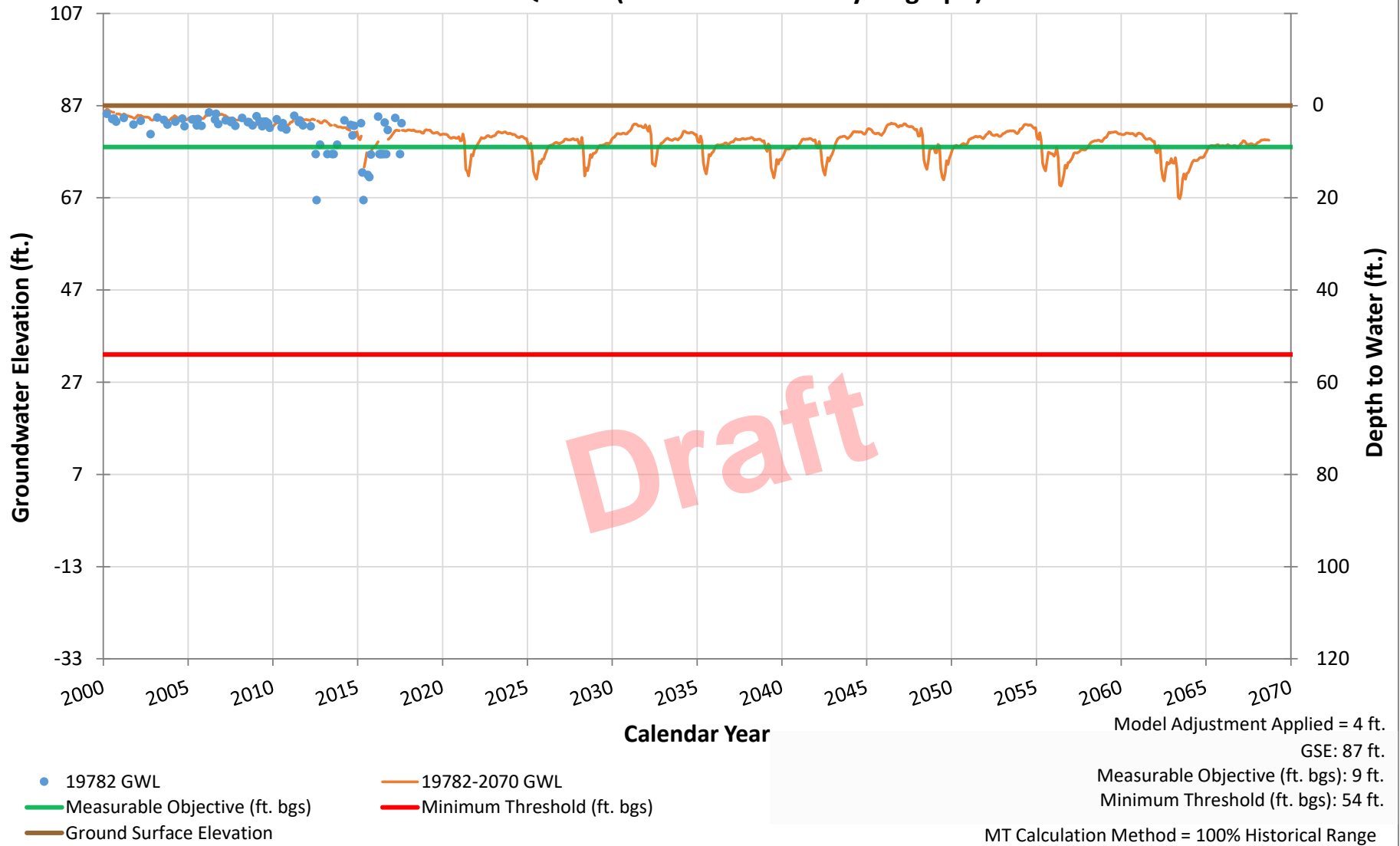
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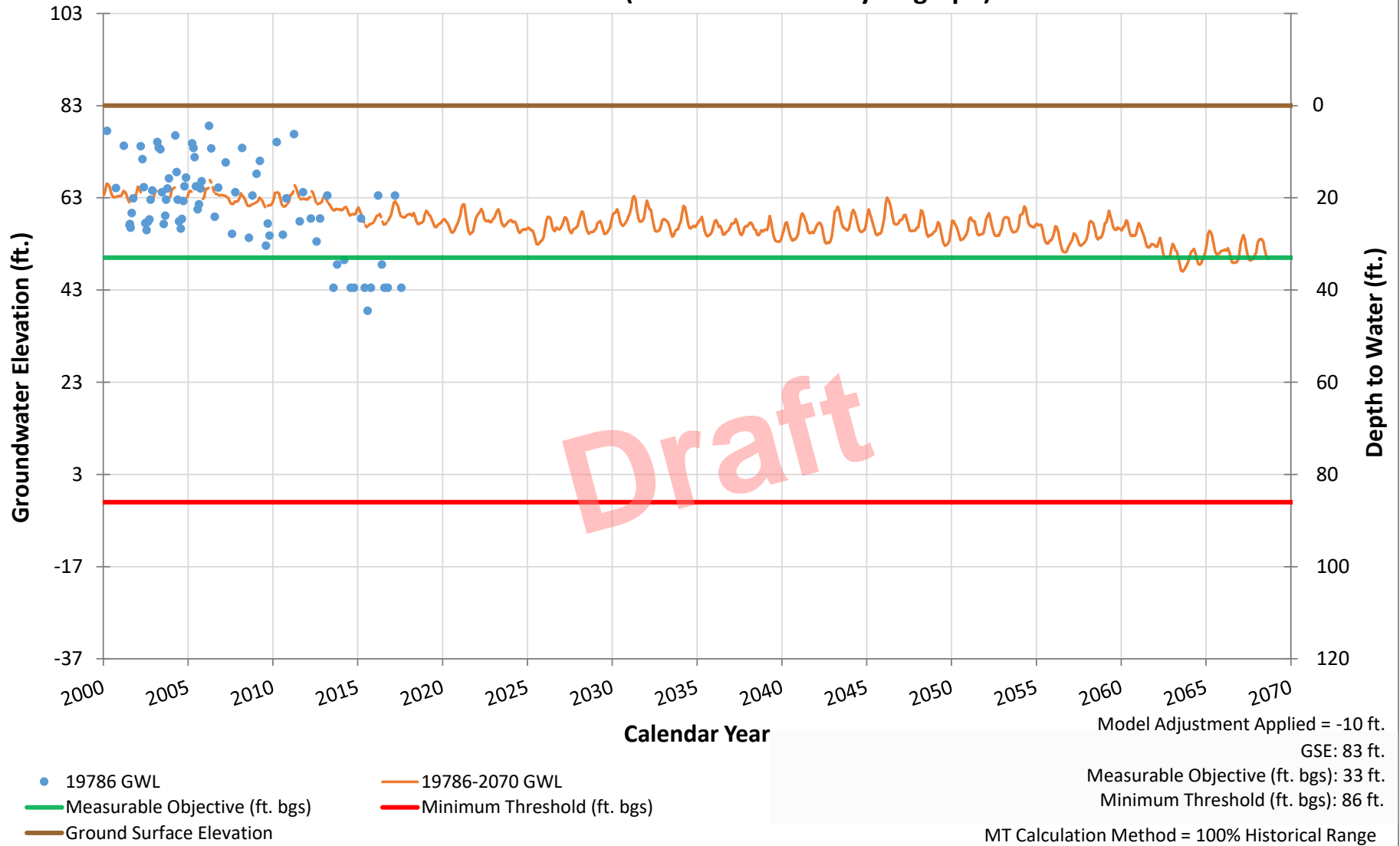
### SWN 19N01E09Q001M (CASGEM - 19780 Hydrograph)



### SWN 19N01E27Q001M (CASGEM - 19782 Hydrograph)

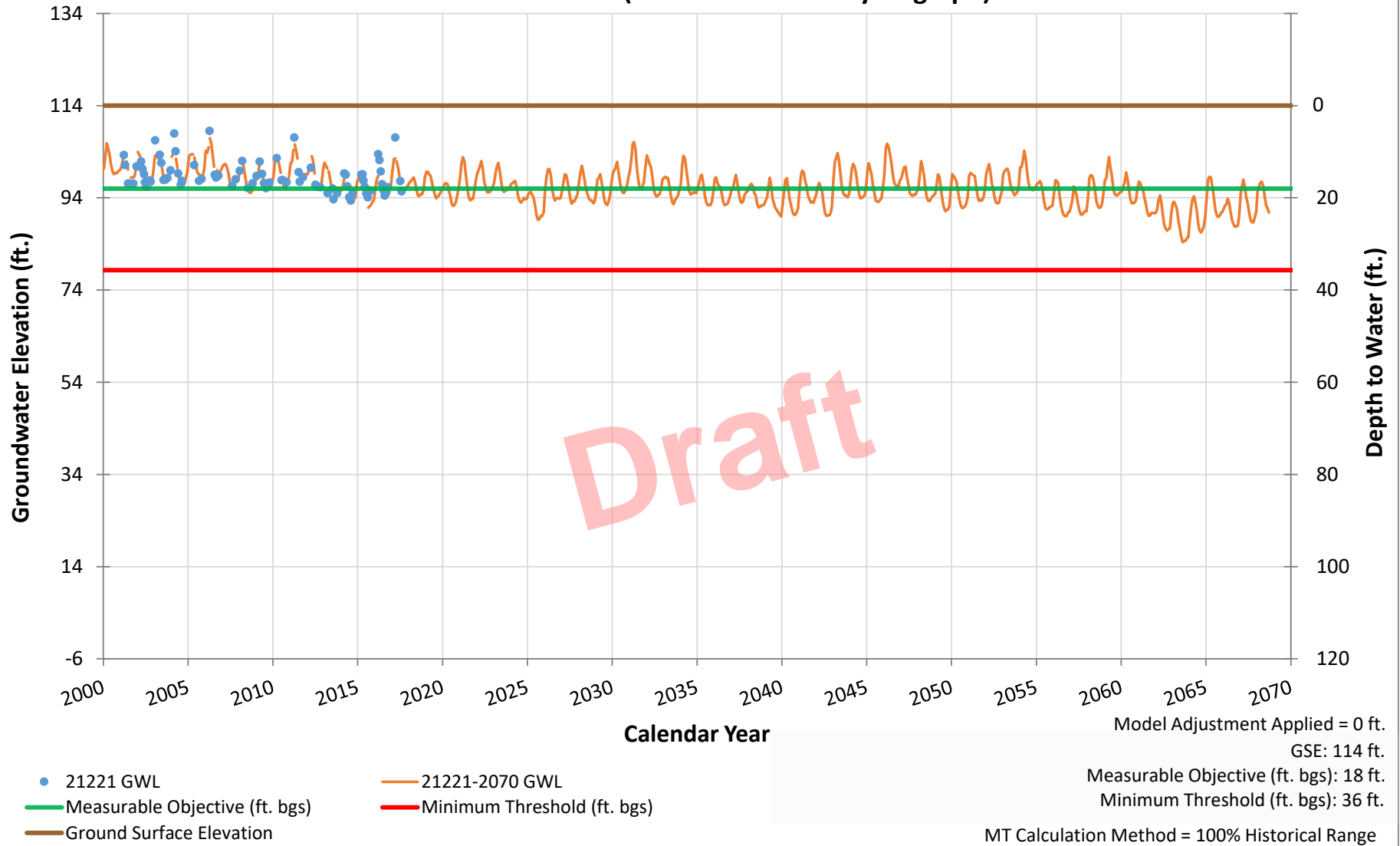


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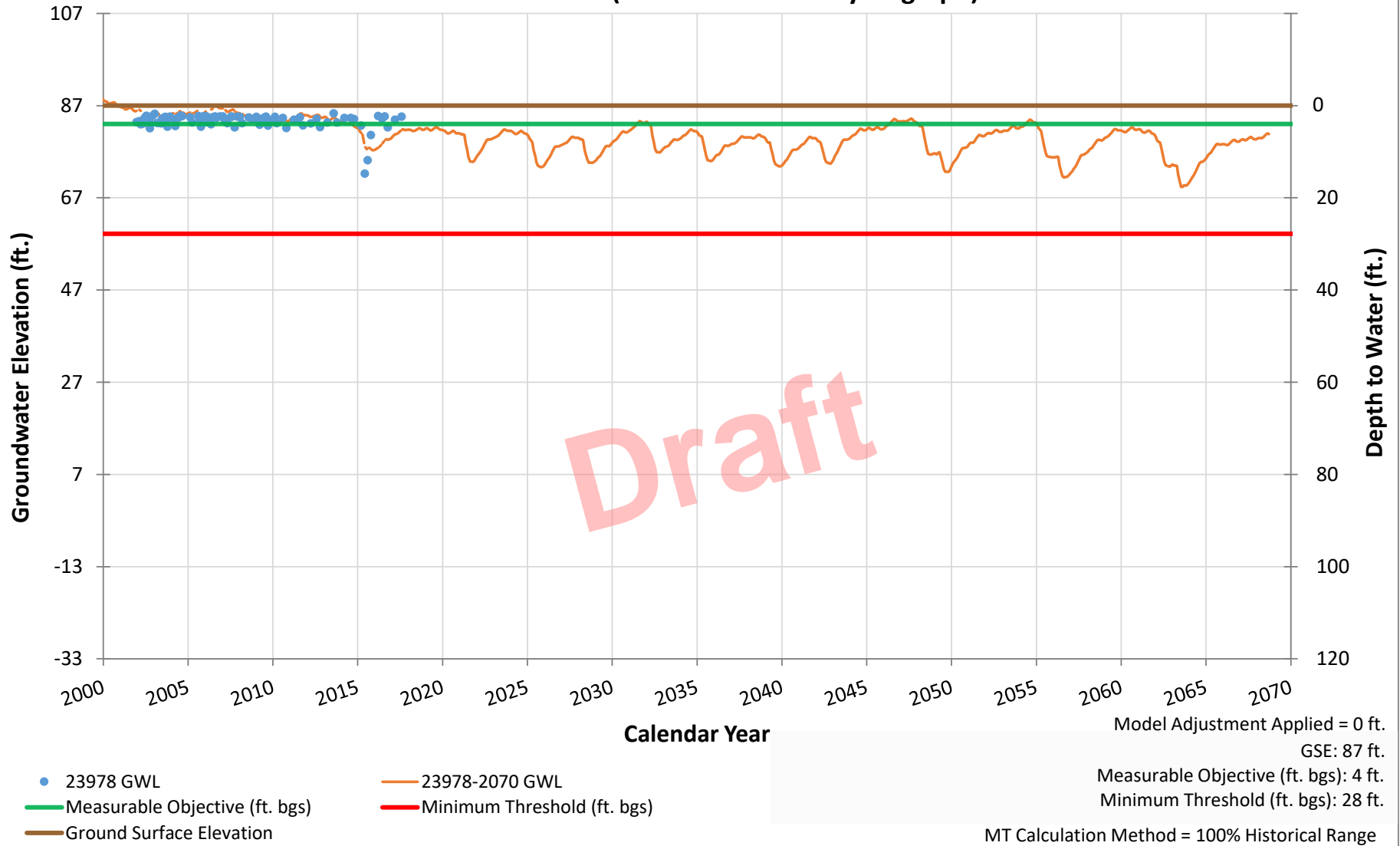


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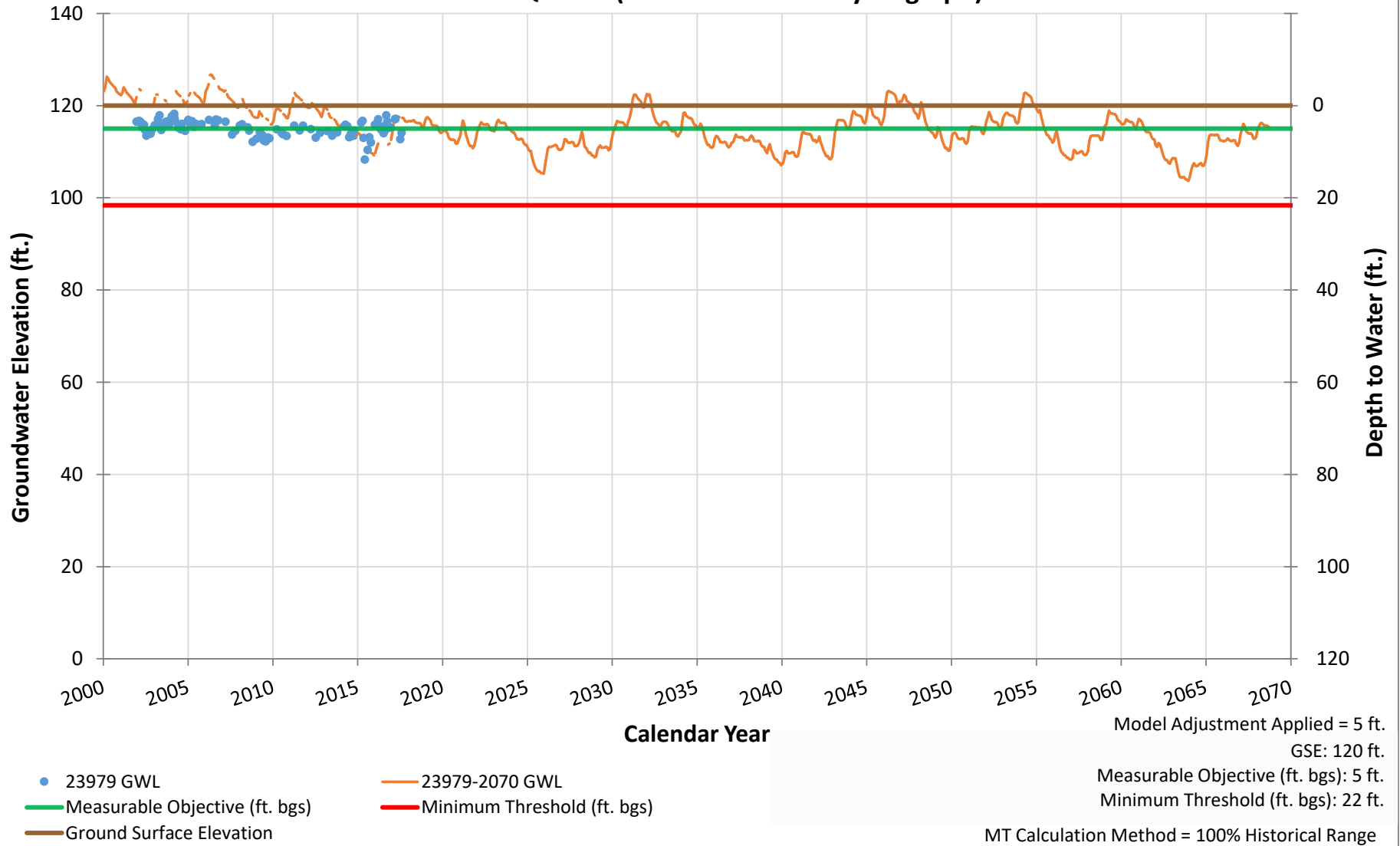
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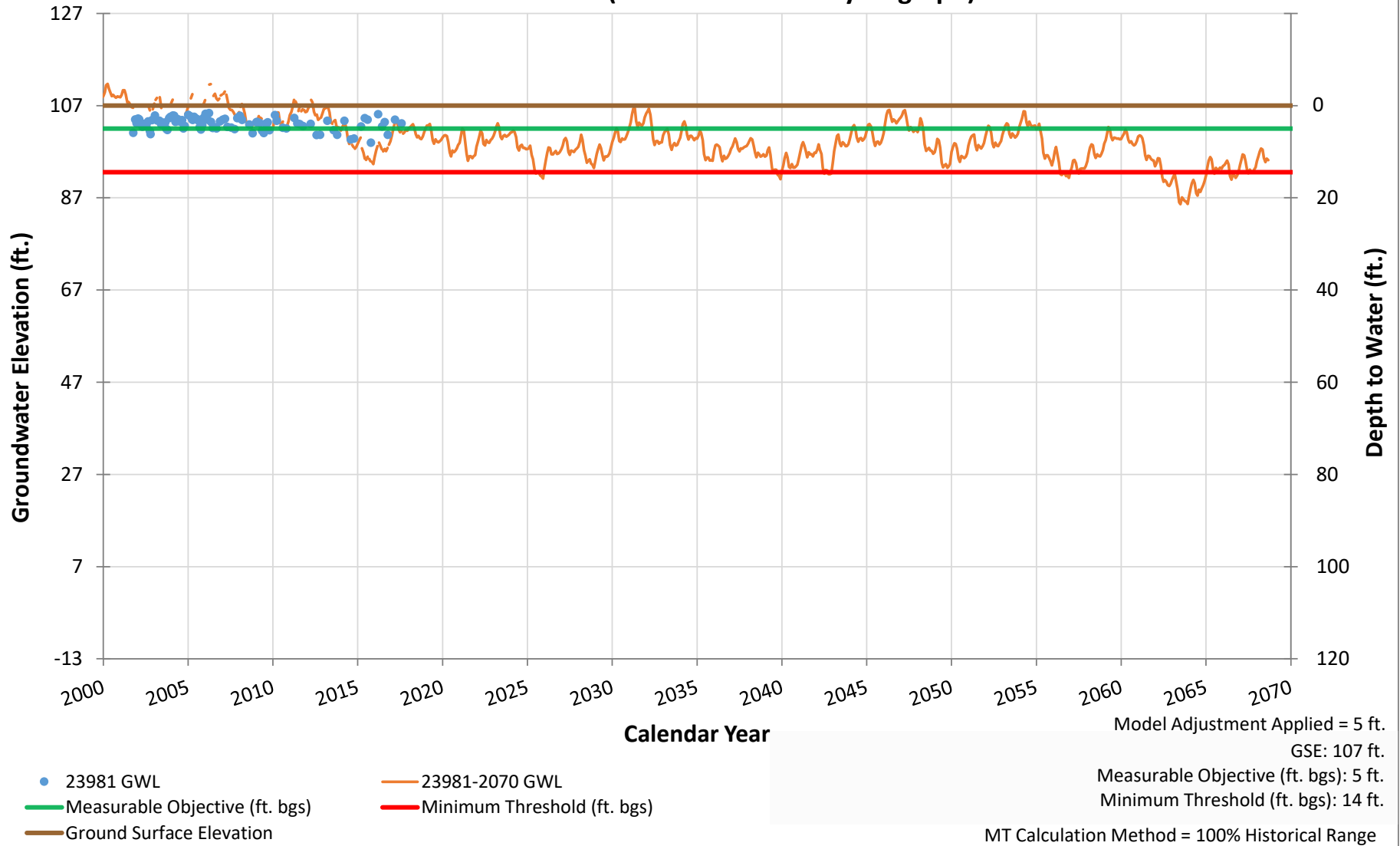
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### SWN 19N02E13Q001M (CASGEM - 23979 Hydrograph)

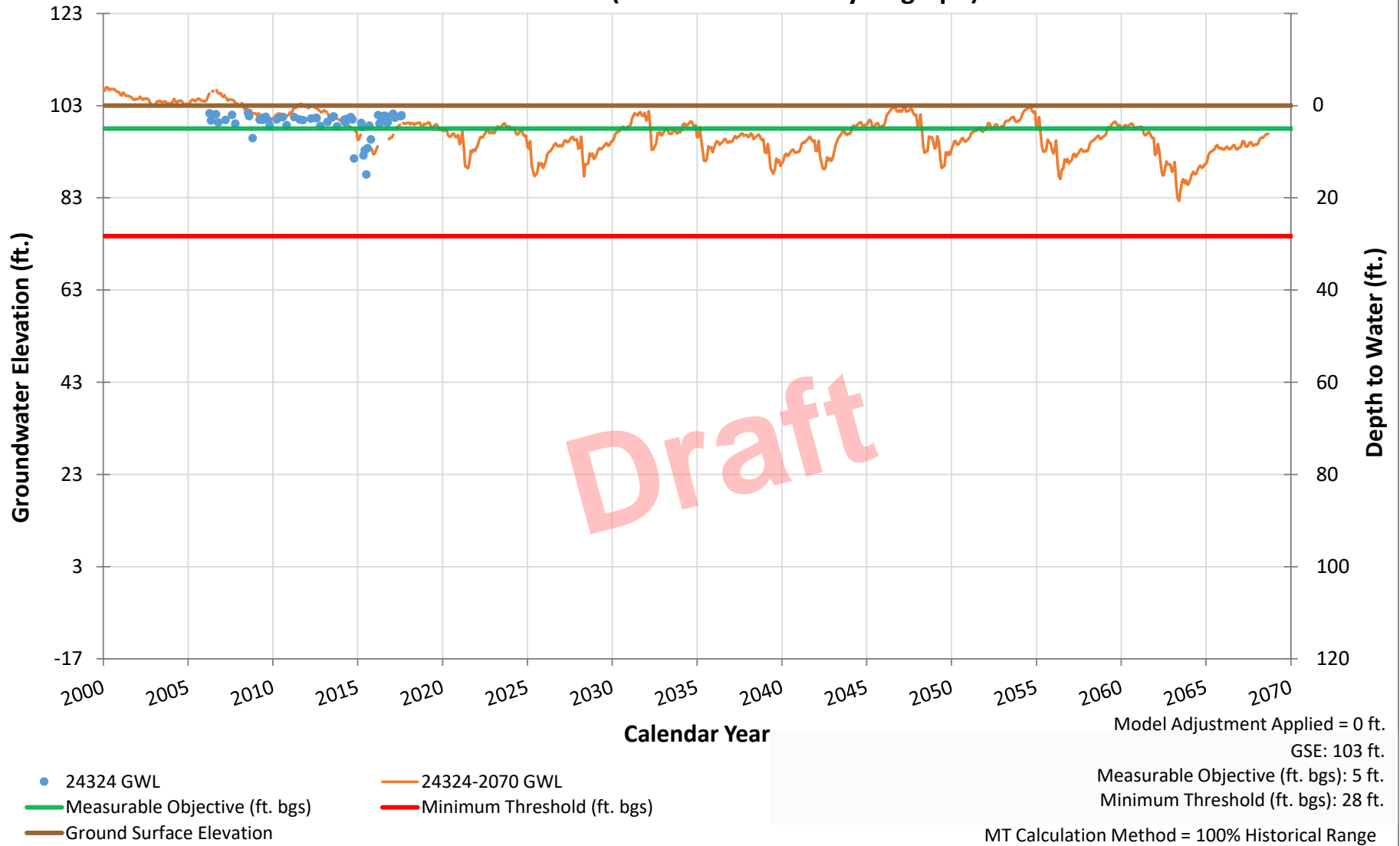


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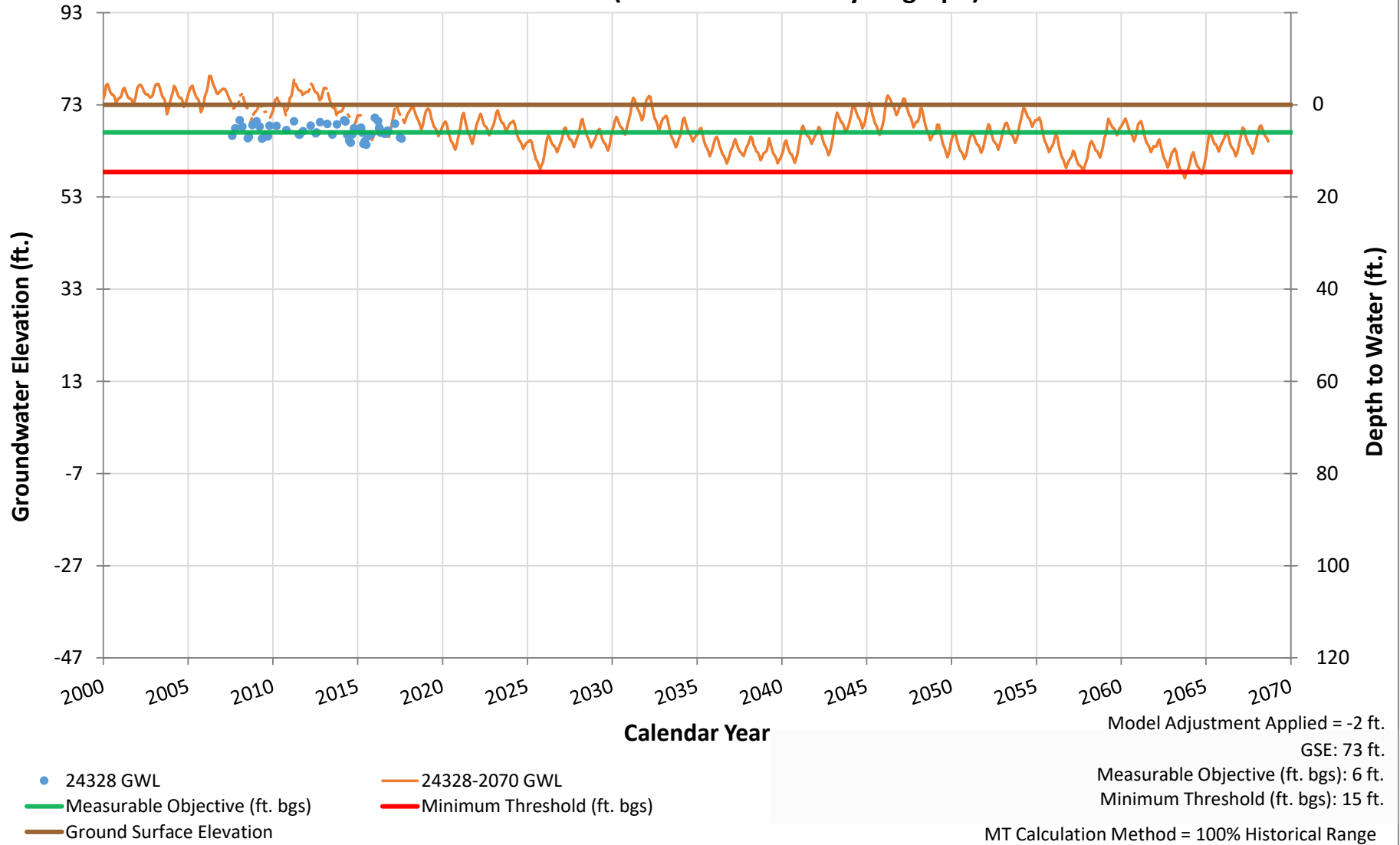




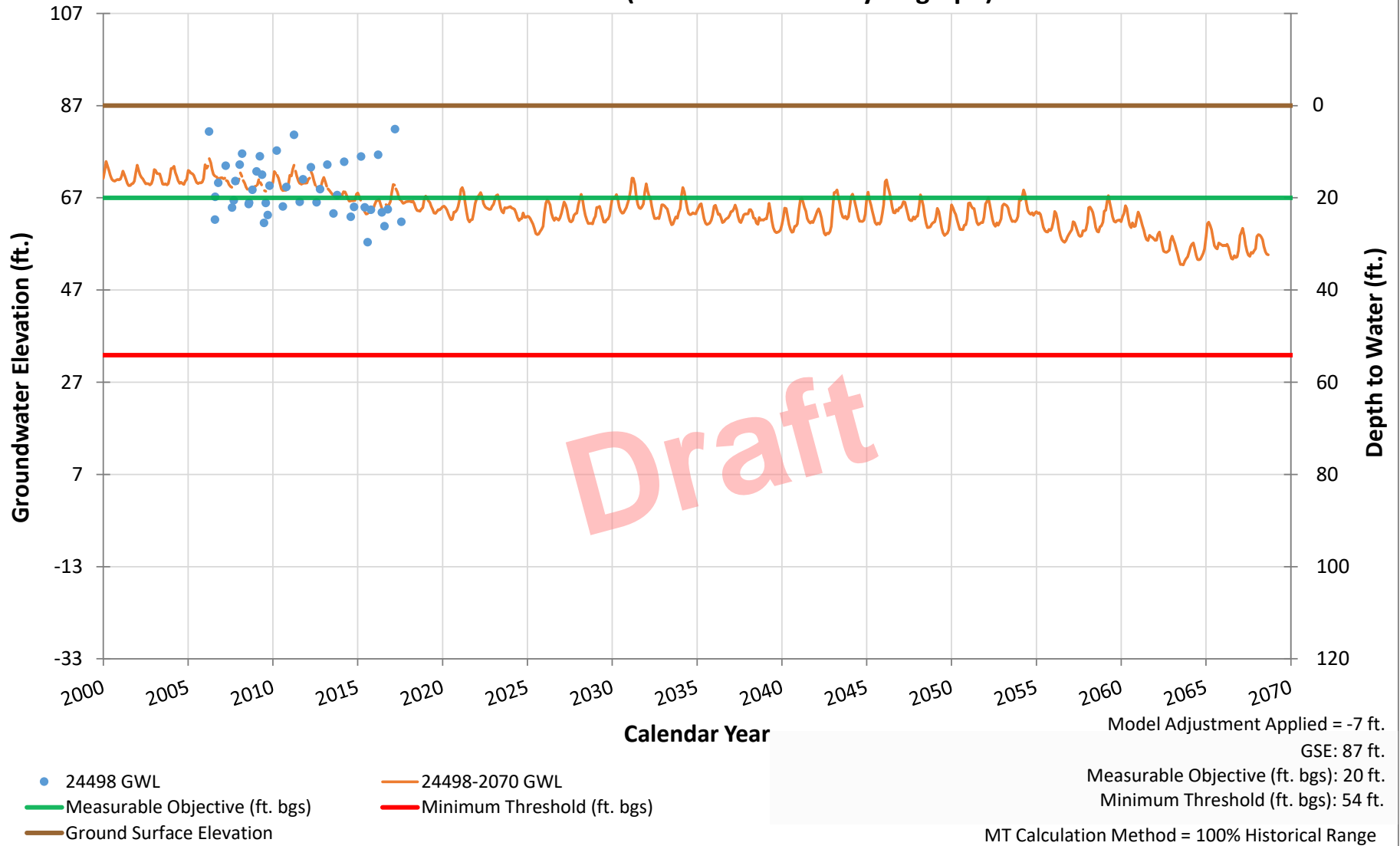
### SWN 19N02E07K004M (CASGEM - 24324 Hydrograph)



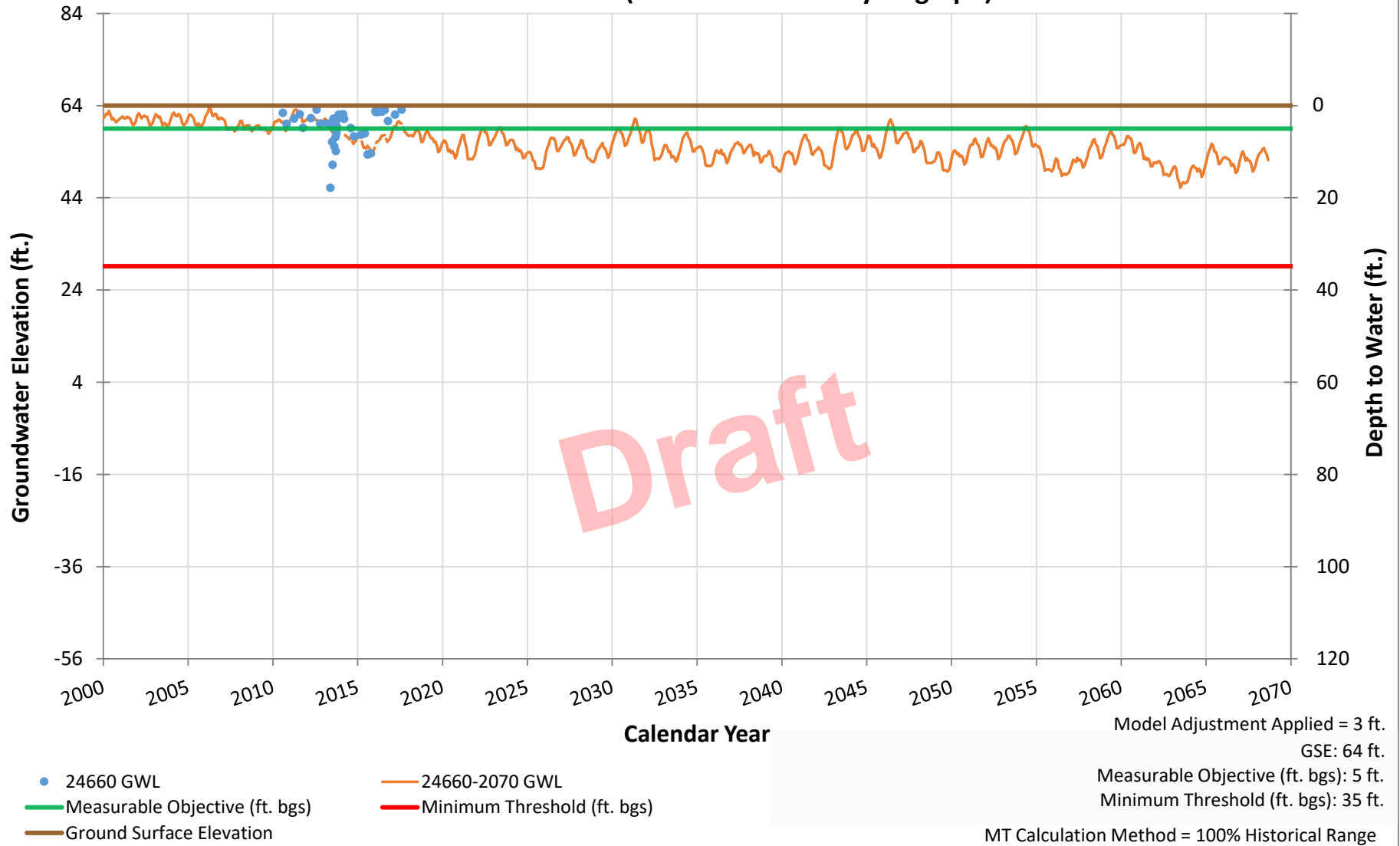
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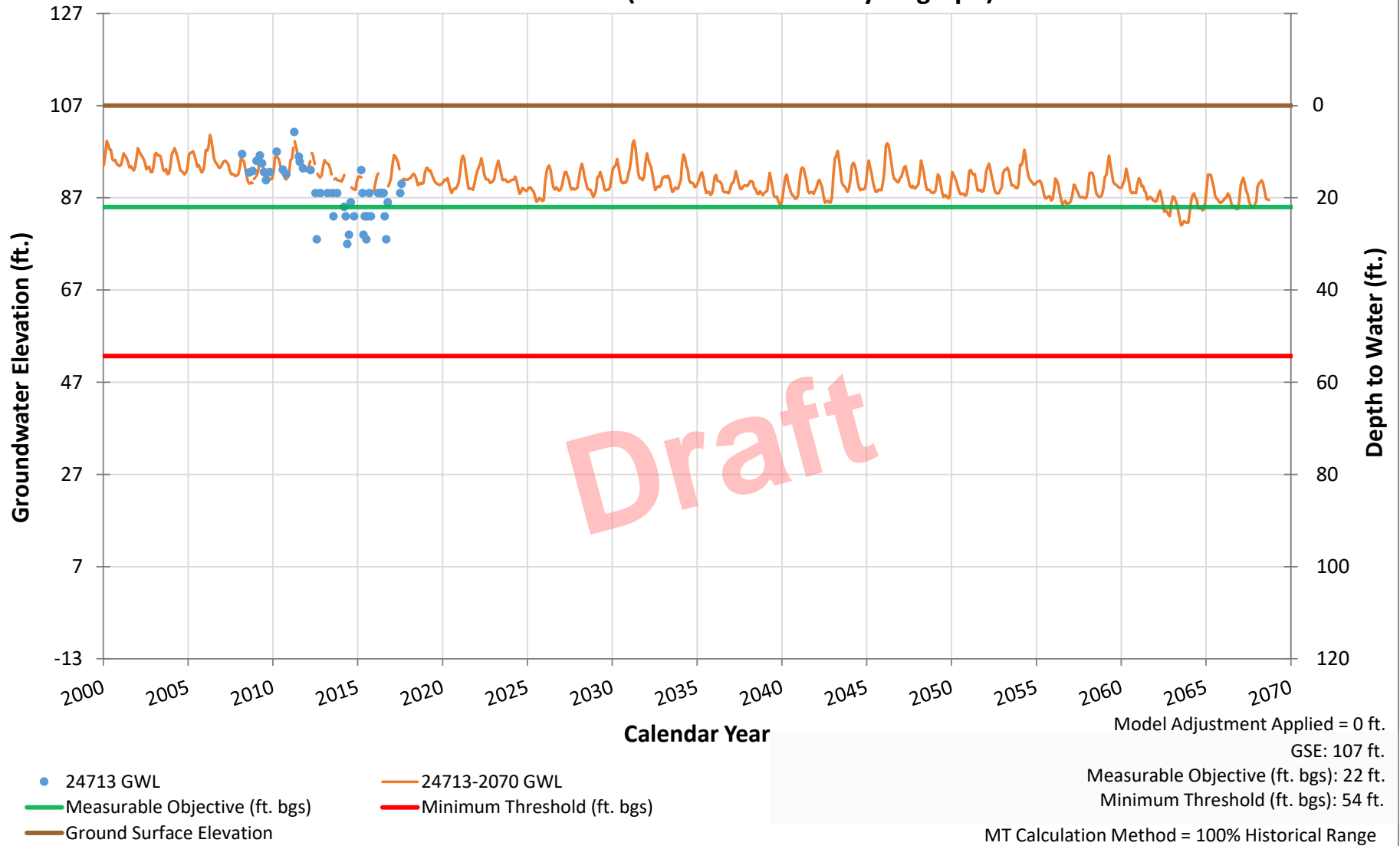
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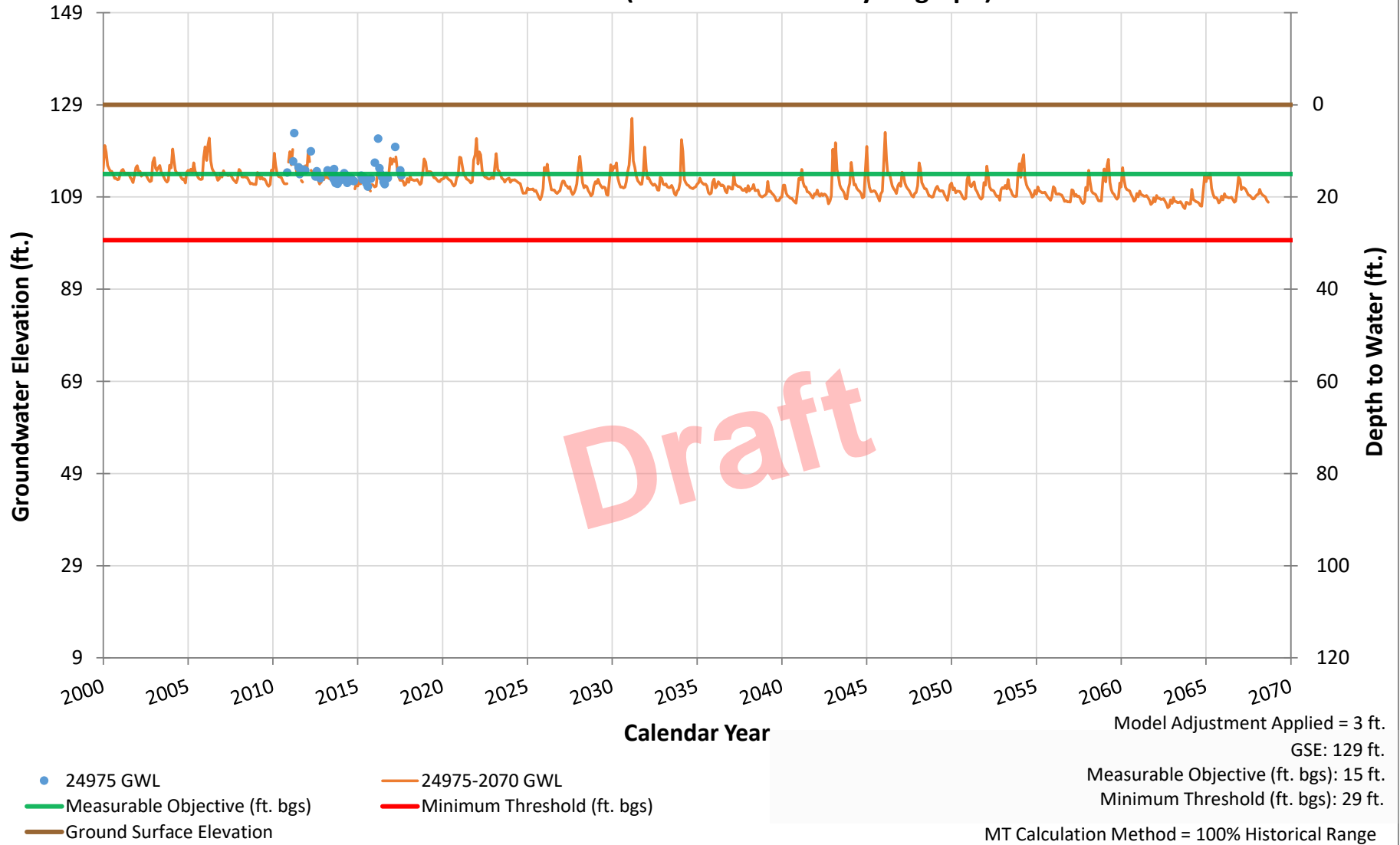
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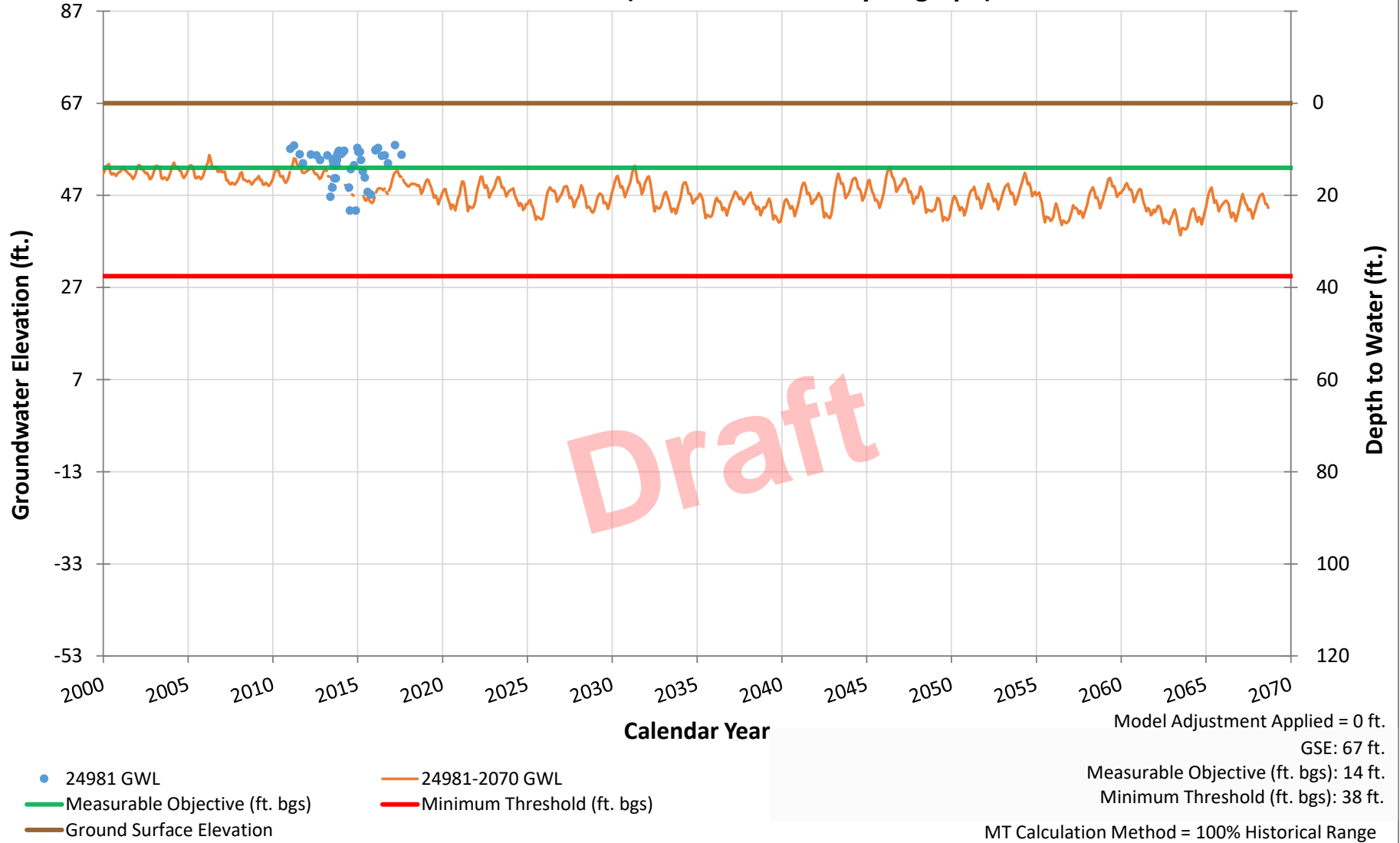
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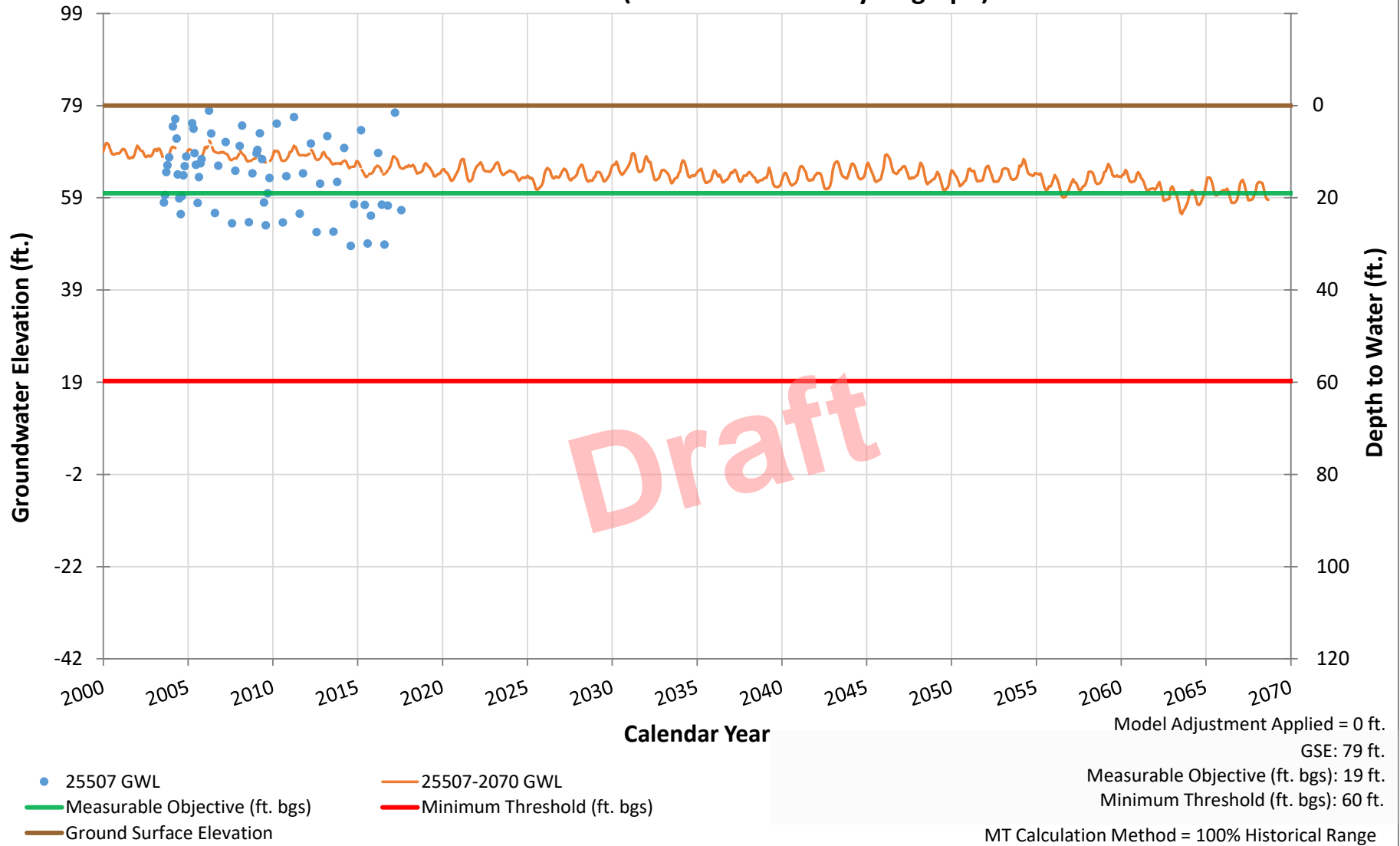
### SWN 21N01W11A002M (CASGEM - 24975 Hydrograph)



### SWN 17N01W27A003M (CASGEM - 24981 Hydrograph)

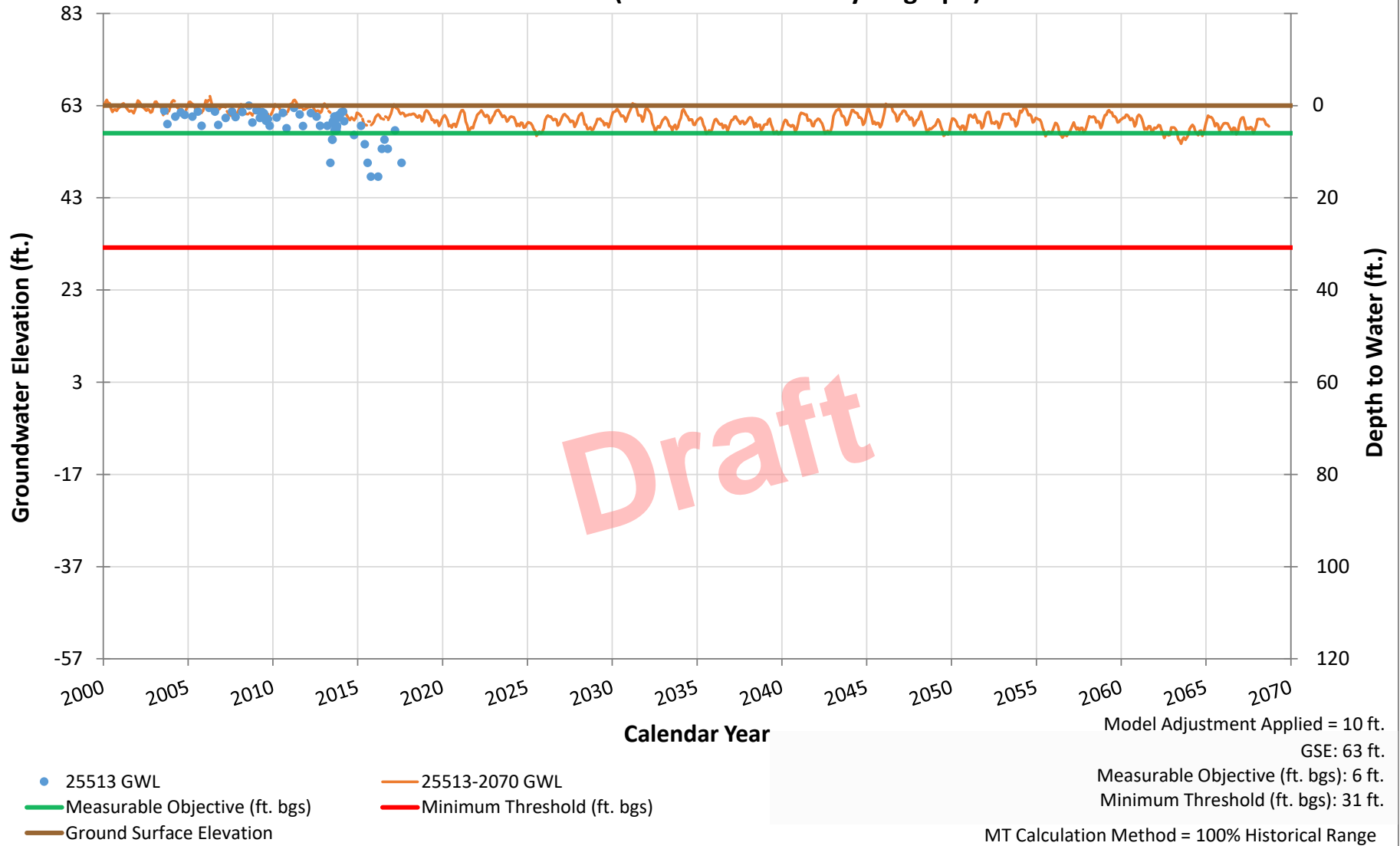


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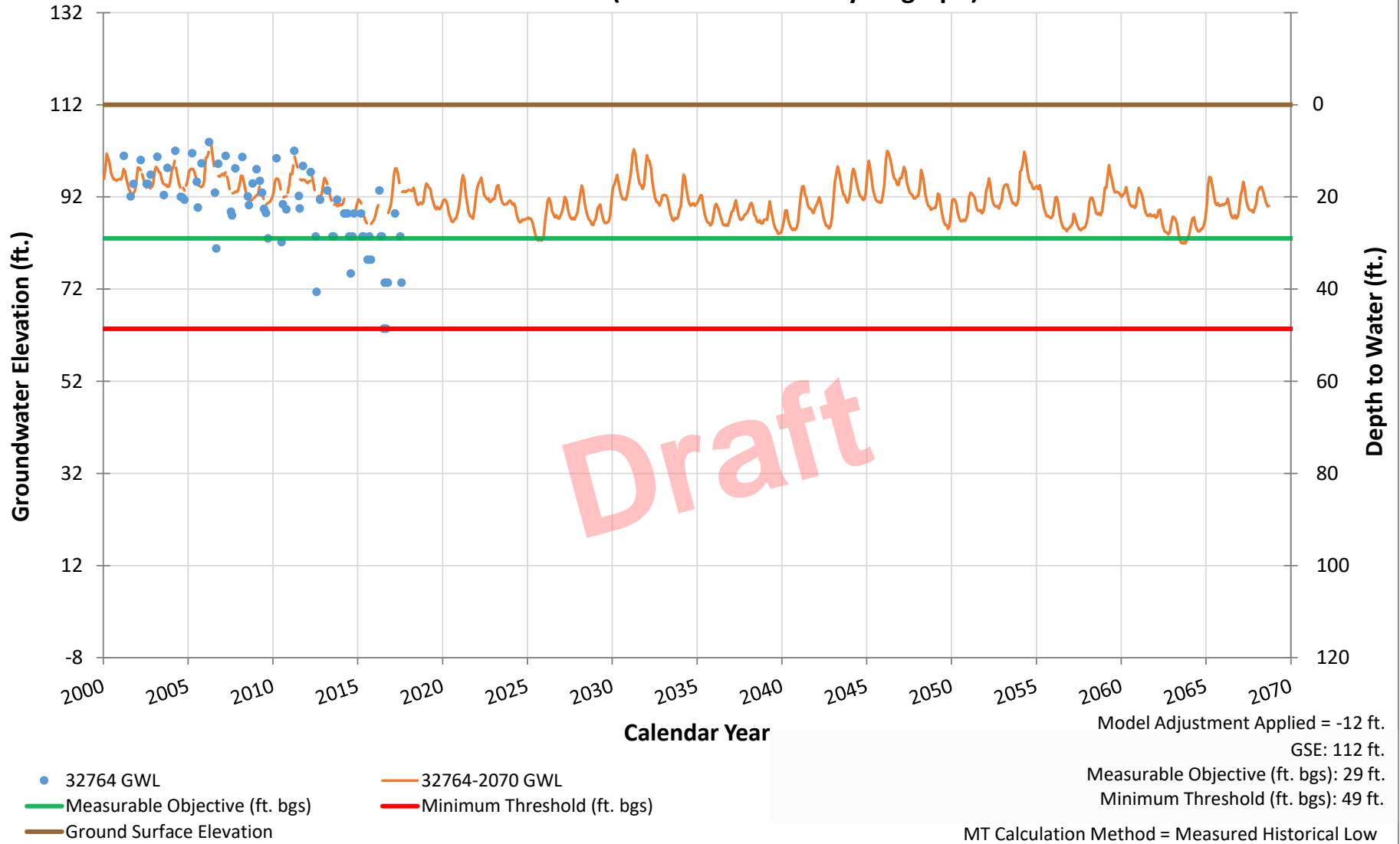




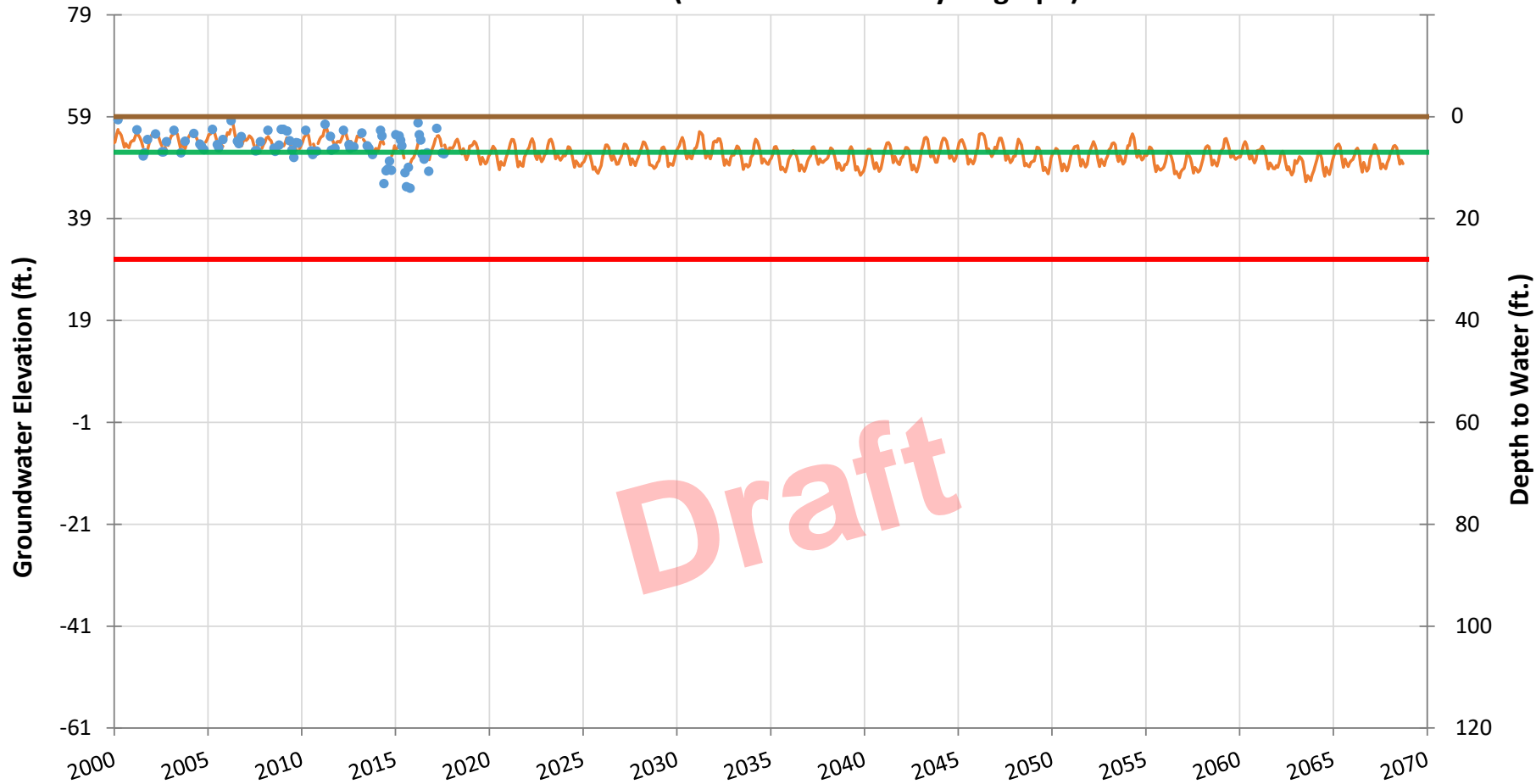
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### SWN 18N03E08B003M (CASGEM - 32764 Hydrograph)



### SWN 17N01E17F001M (CASGEM - 33031 Hydrograph)

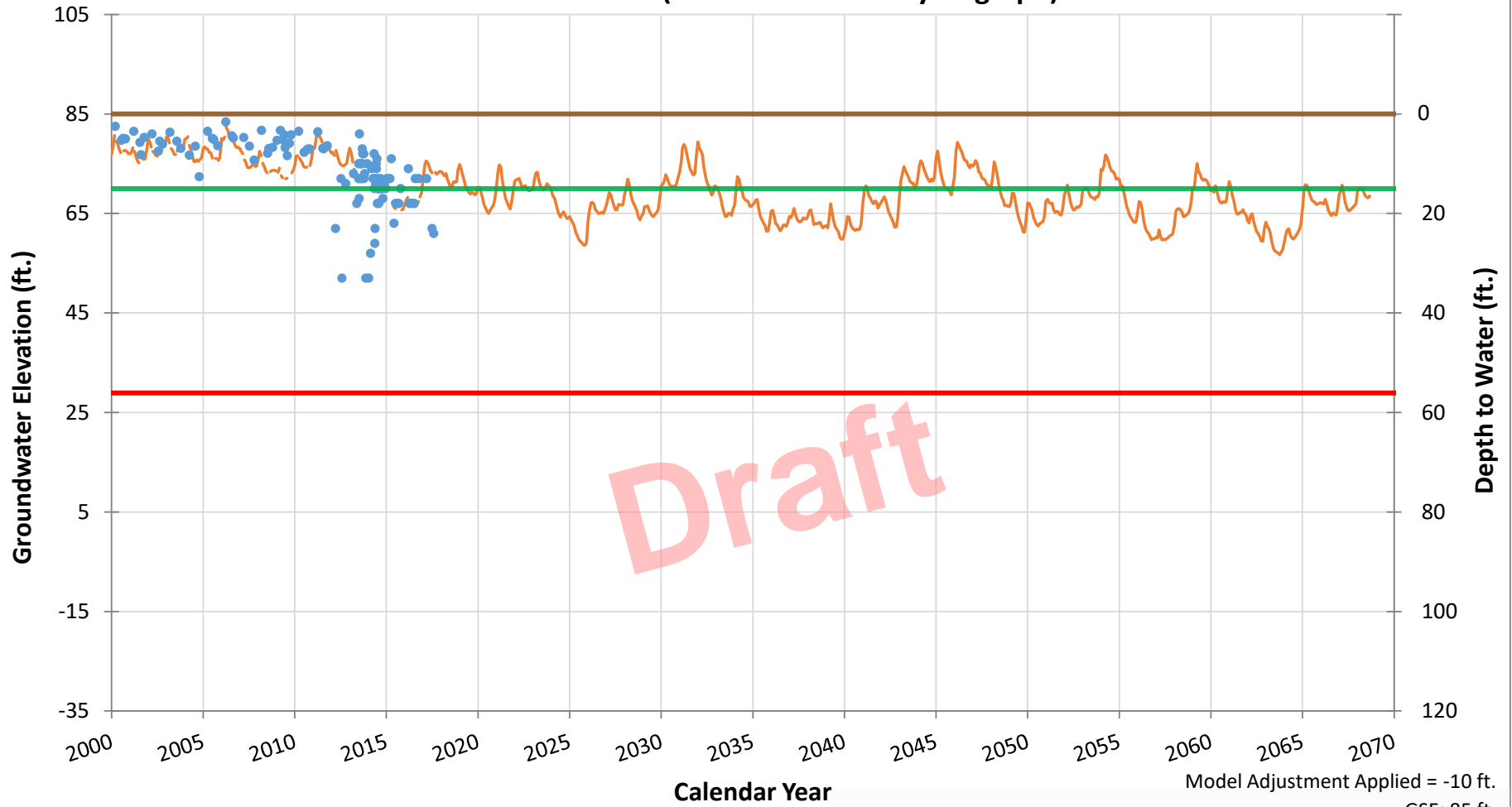


Model Adjustment Applied = 3 ft.  
GSE: 59 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 7 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 28 ft.

- 33031 GWL
- 33031-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 17N02E14A001M (CASGEM - 33033 Hydrograph)

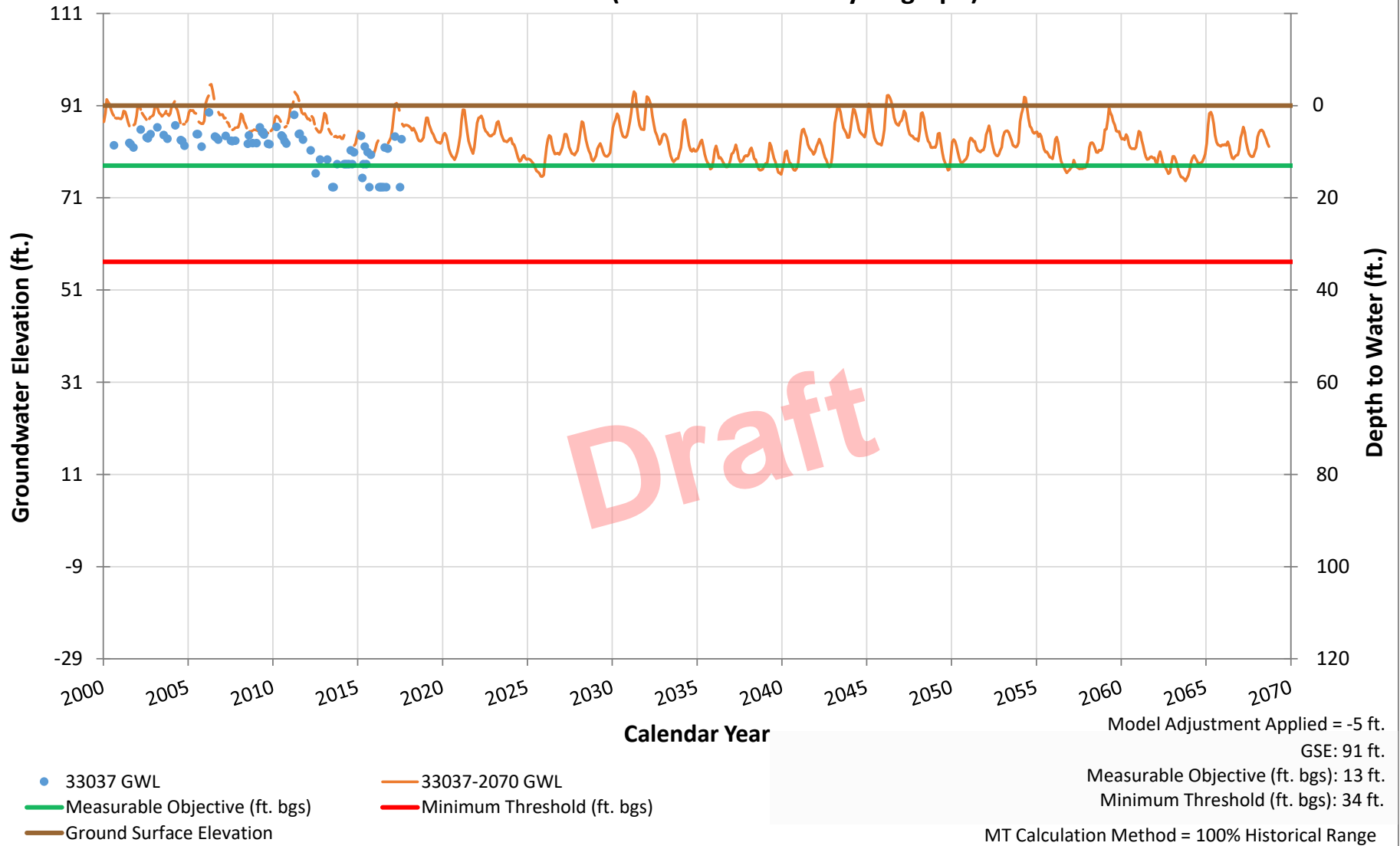


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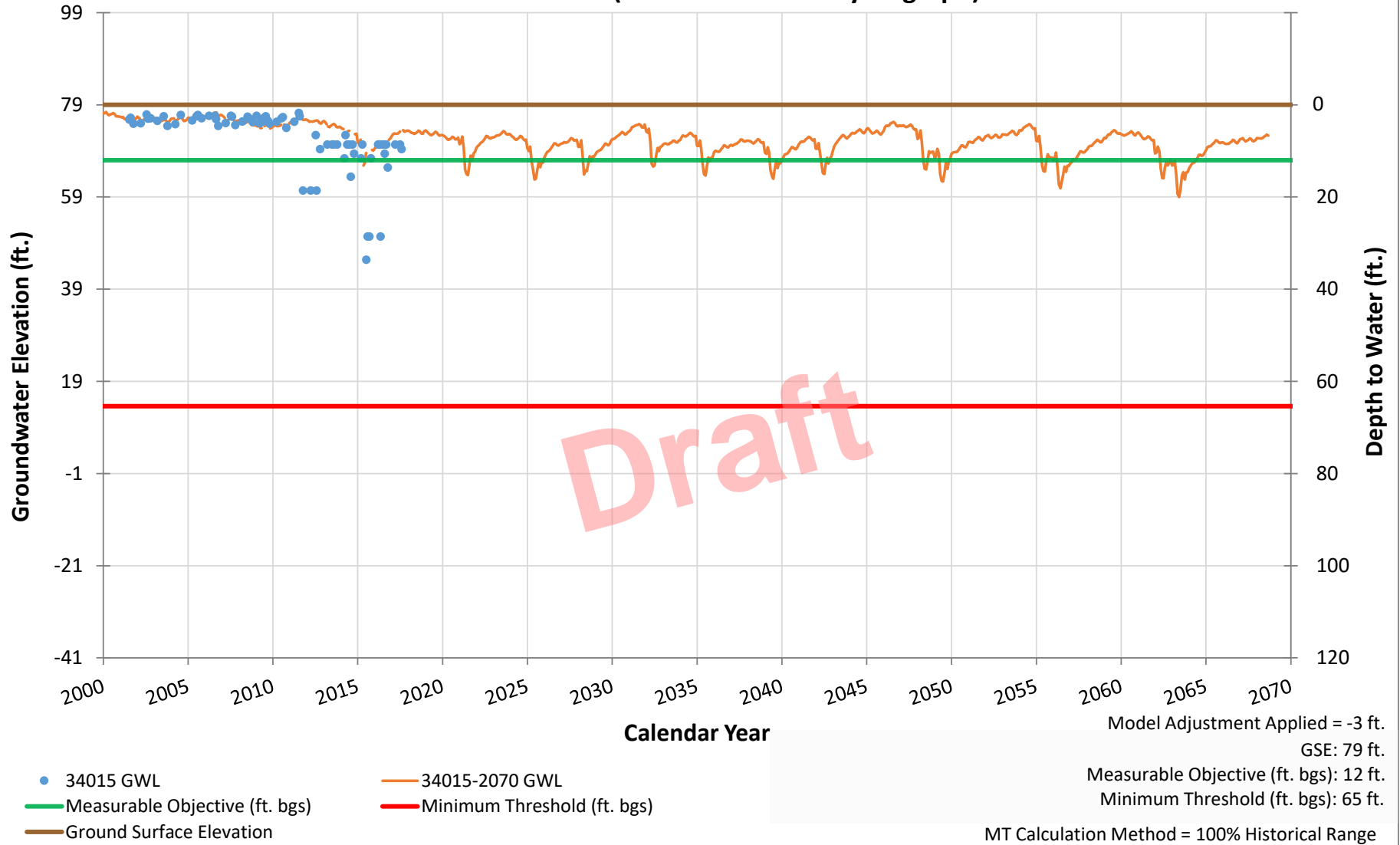
- 33033 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation
- 33033-2070 GWL
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)

Model Adjustment Applied = -10 ft.  
 GSE: 85 ft.  
 Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 15 ft.  
 Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 56 ft.  
 MT Calculation Method = Shallowest 7th Percentile of Domestic Well Depths

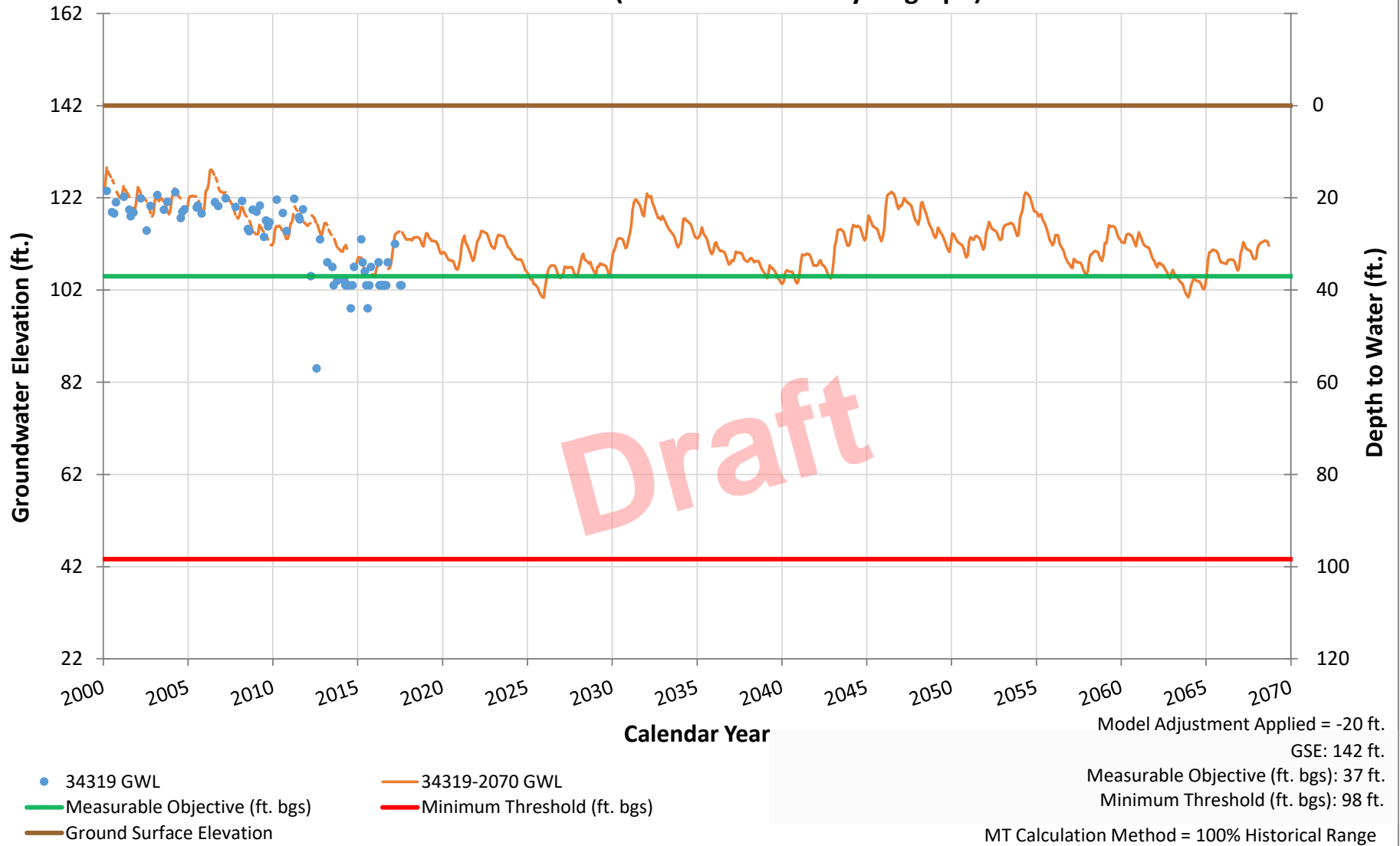
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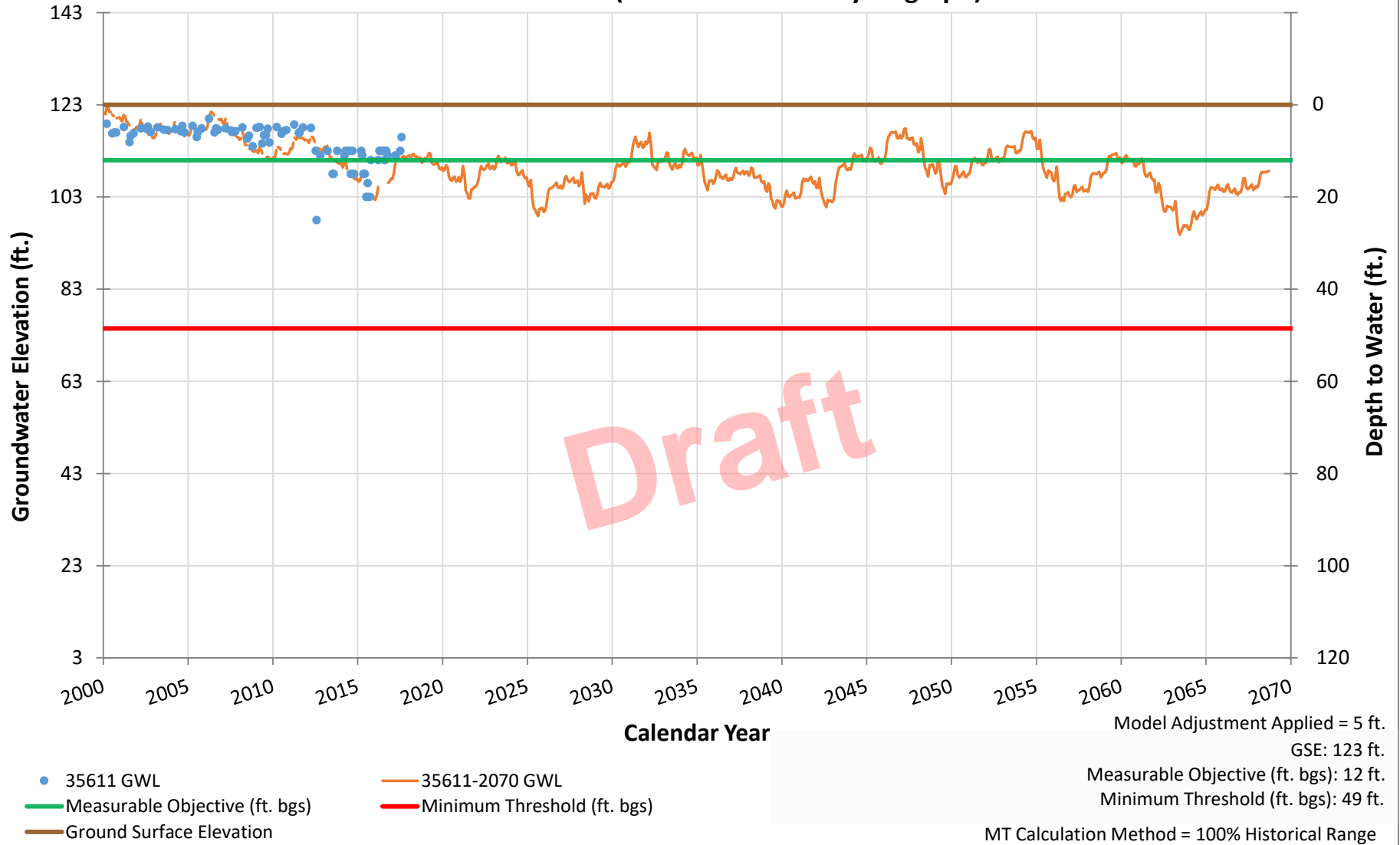
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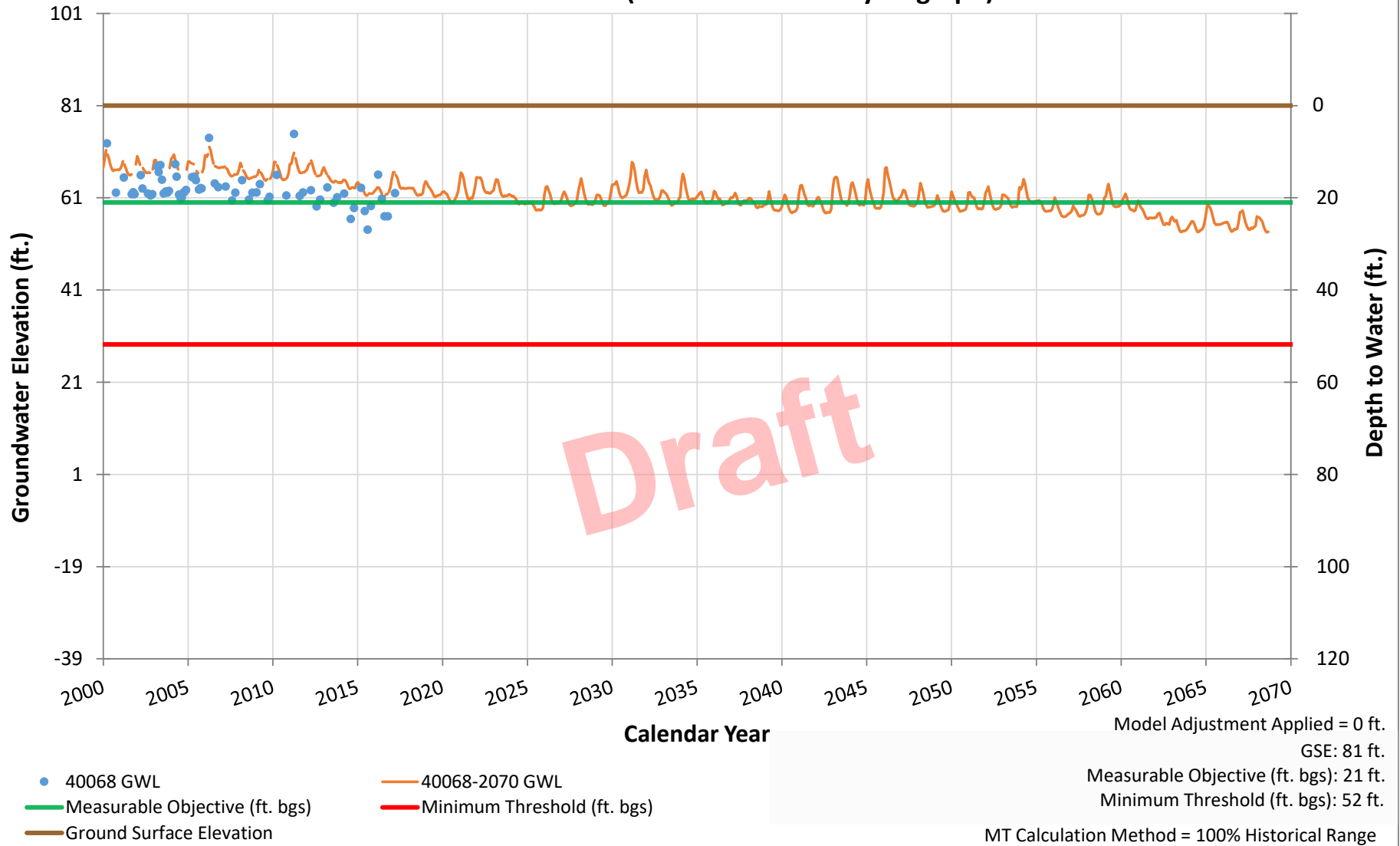


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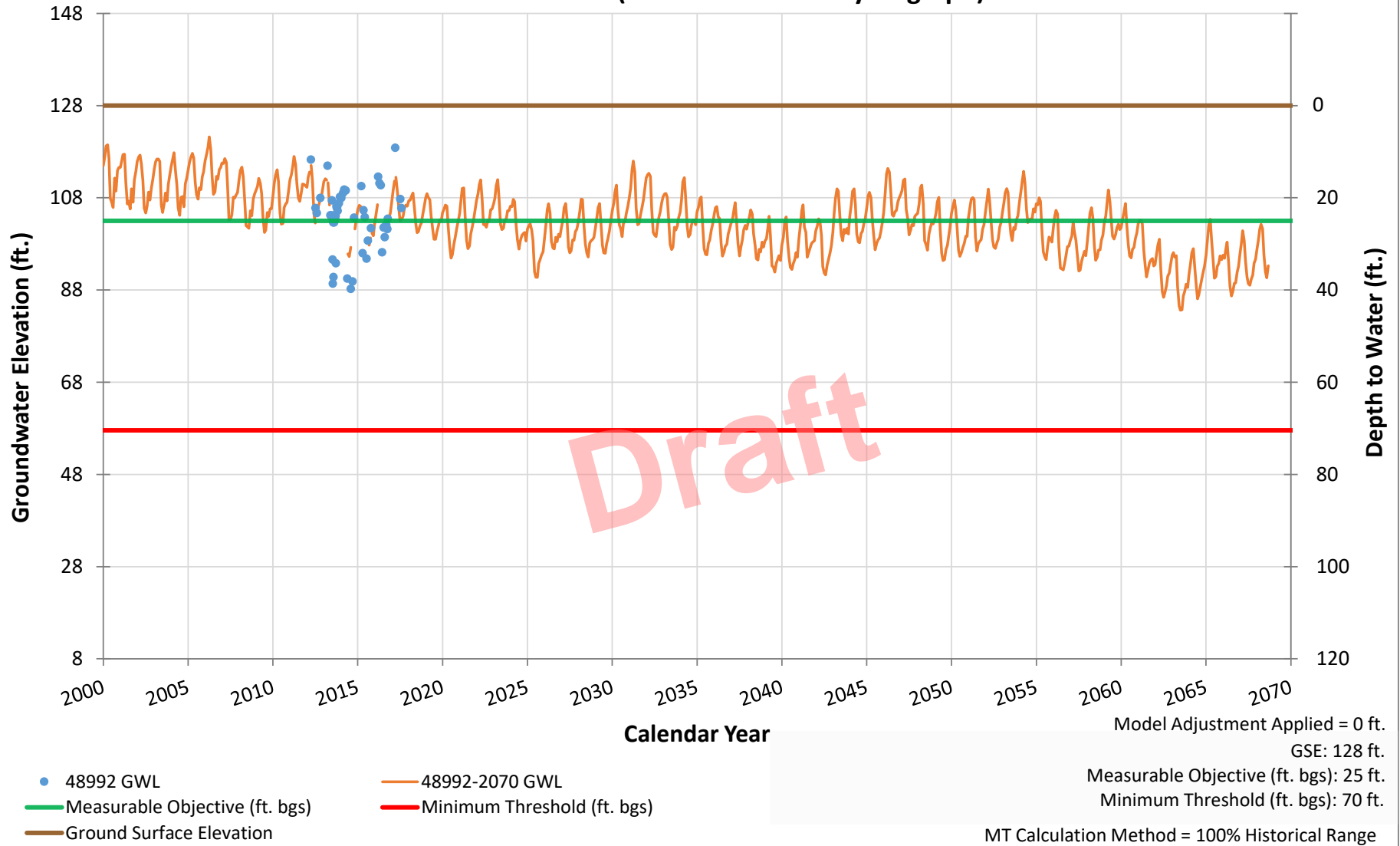




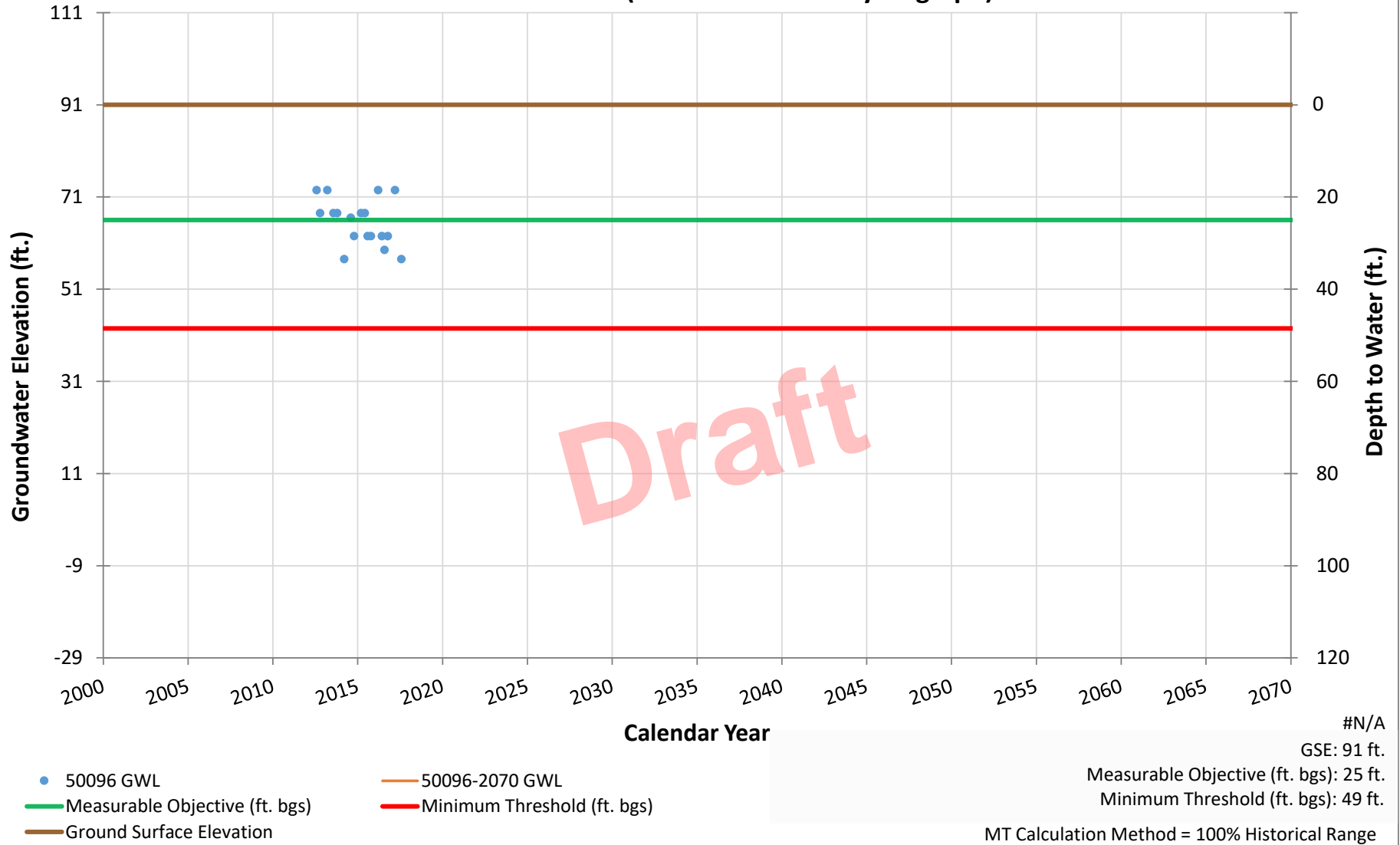
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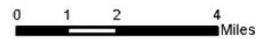


# Deep Groundwater Levels Monitoring Network

Butte Subbasin GSP



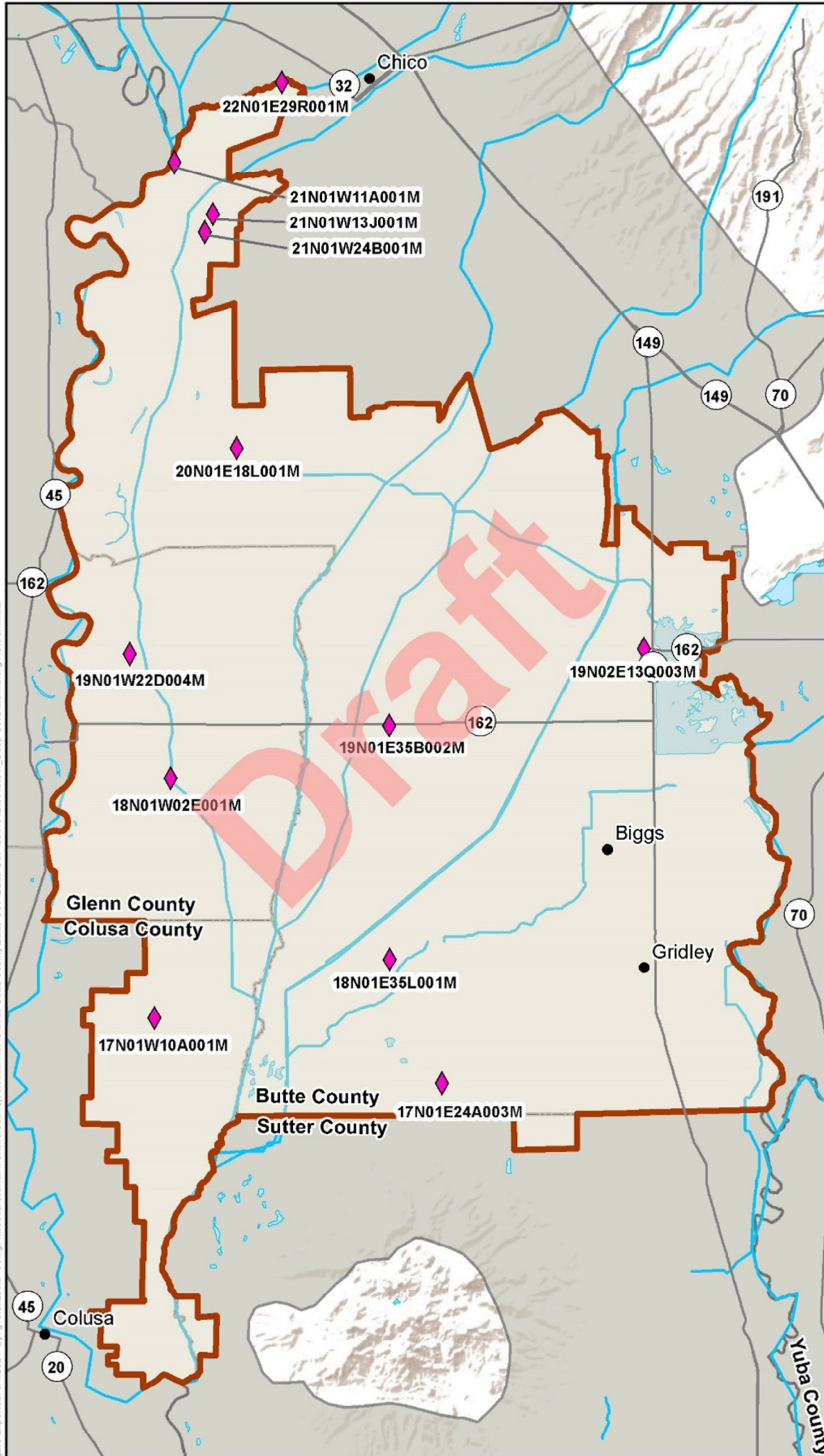
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-  Cities
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-  Counties
-  Neighboring Subbasins
-  Lake



Map Created: May 2021

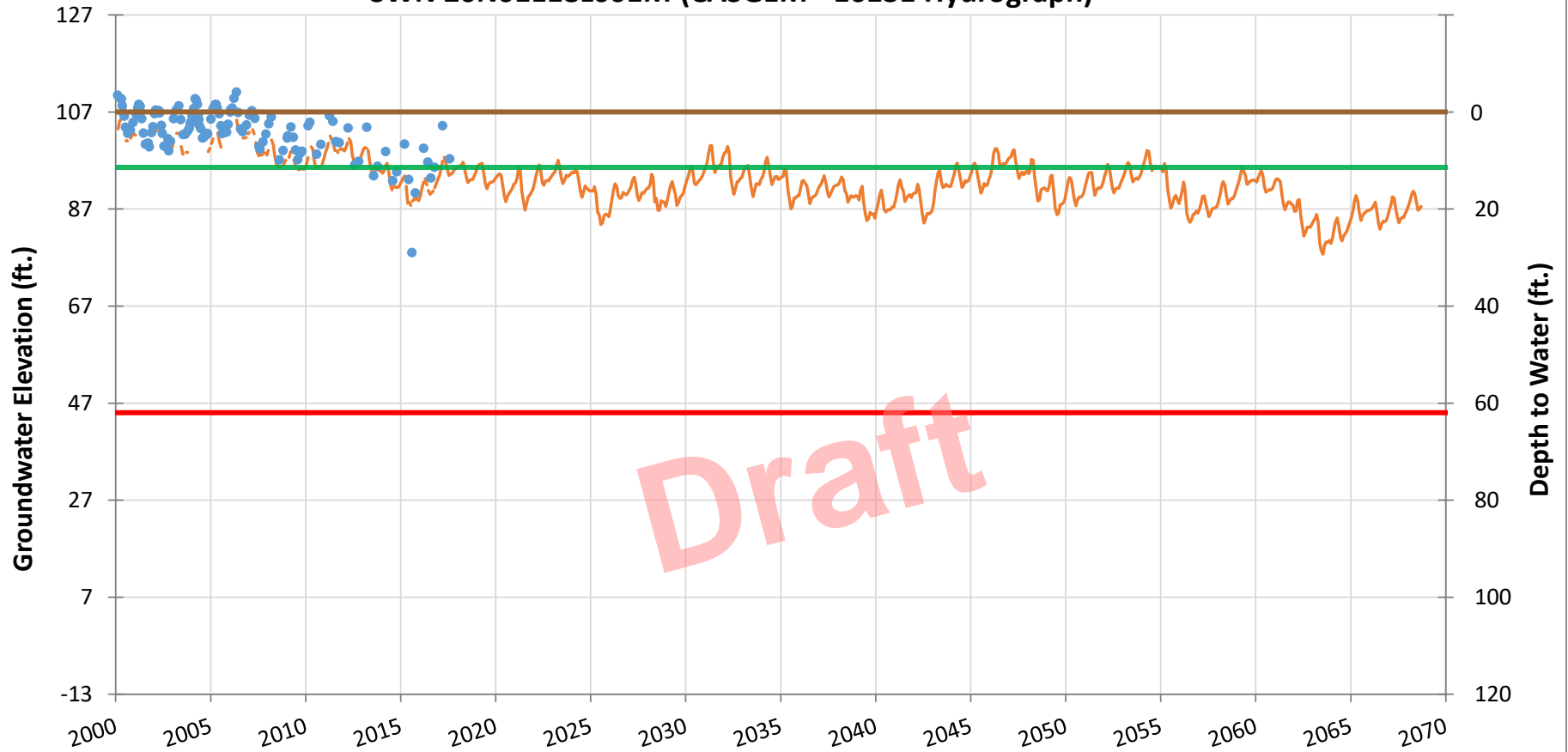
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Figure Exported: 04/2021, By: gvalenzuela, Using: woodardcurran.net\share\Projects\IR\GIS\AC0539\Butte County\Butte GSP\Butte GSP-001\GIS1\_Deep\_GWL\_Monitoring\_Network.mxd





### SWN 20N01E18L001M (CASGEM - 16131 Hydrograph)



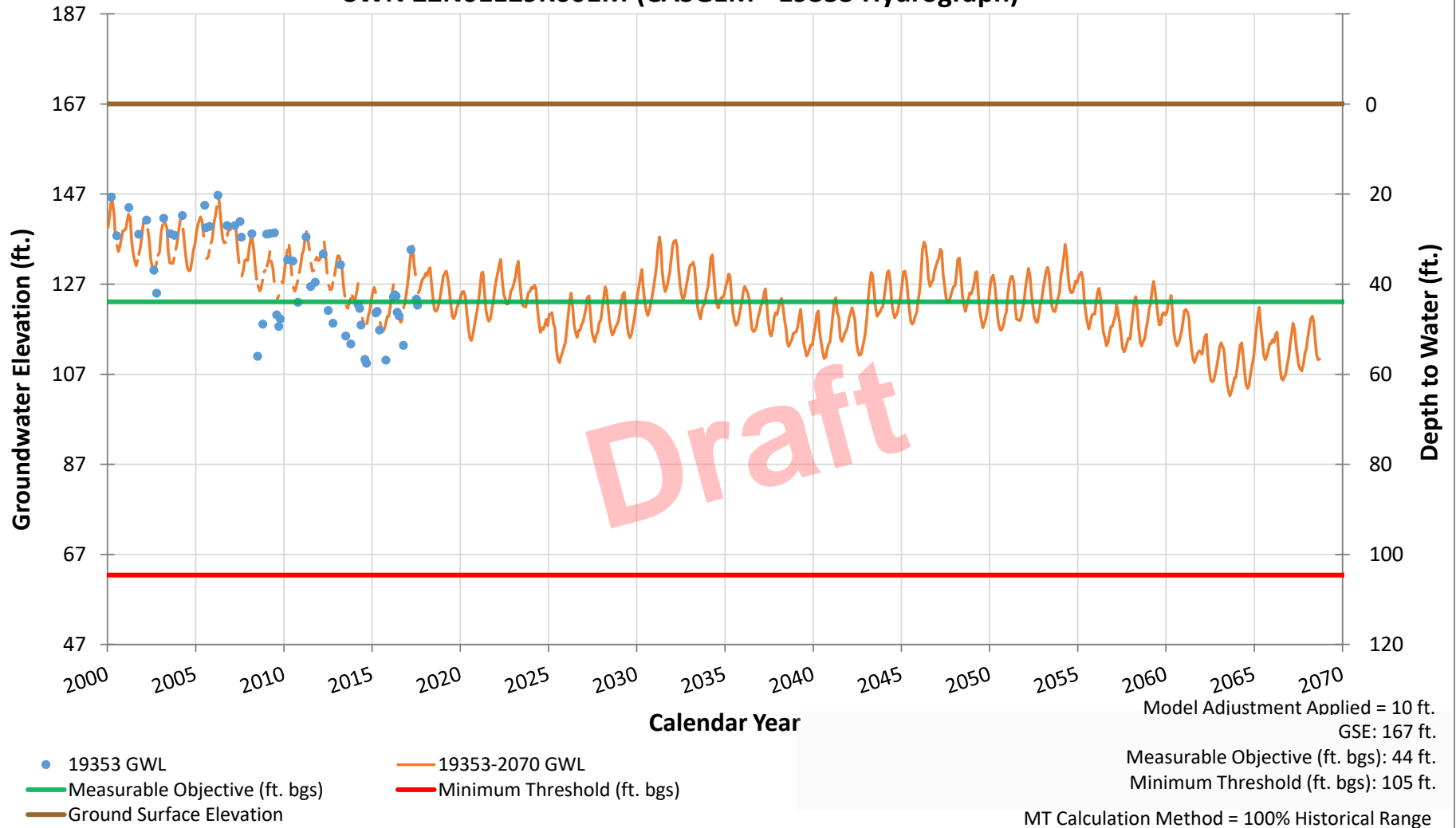
Draft

Model Adjustment Applied = 0 ft.  
GSE: 107 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 11 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 62 ft.

MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

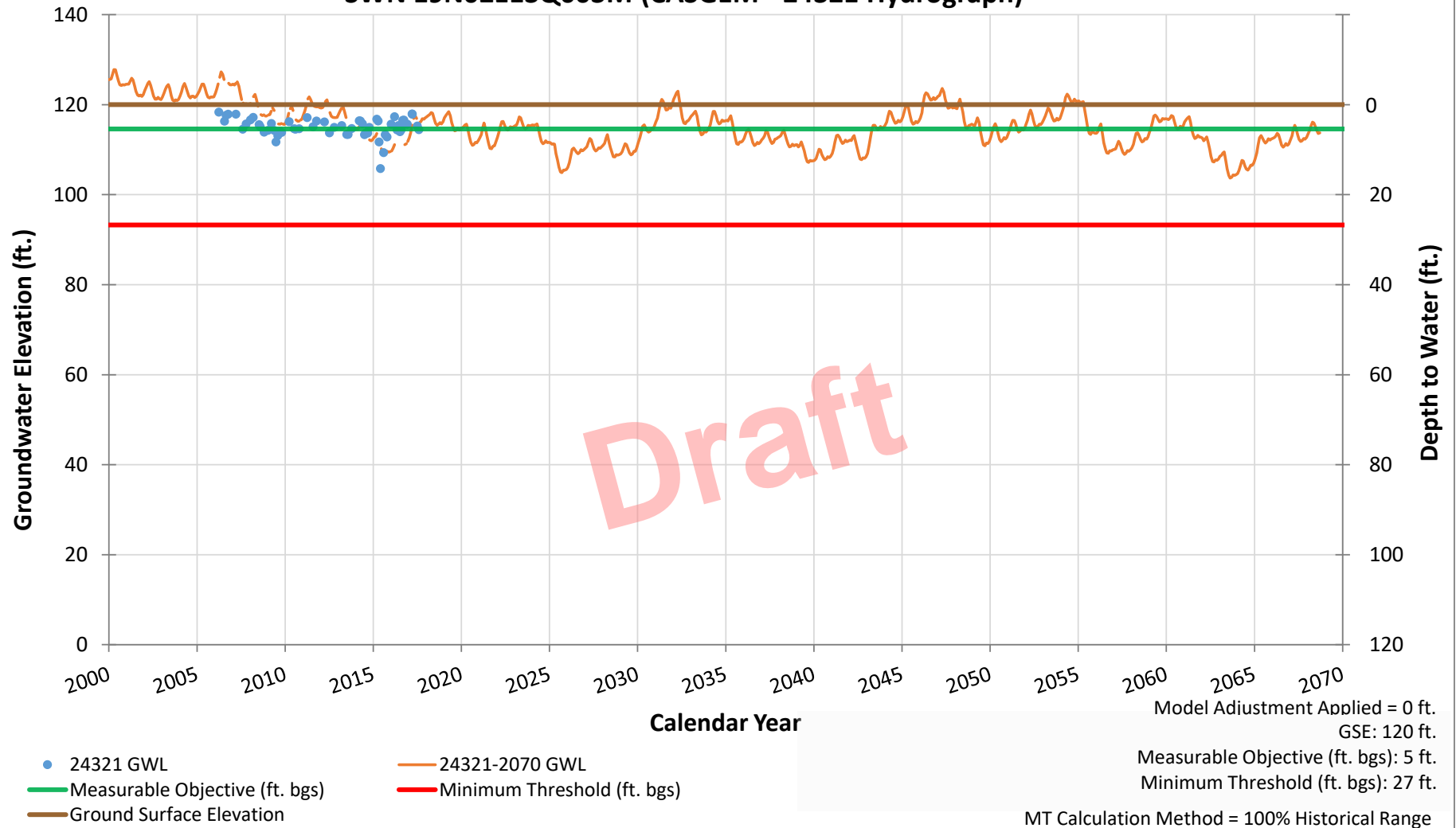
- 16131 GWL
- 16131-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

### SWN 22N01E29R001M (CASGEM - 19353 Hydrograph)



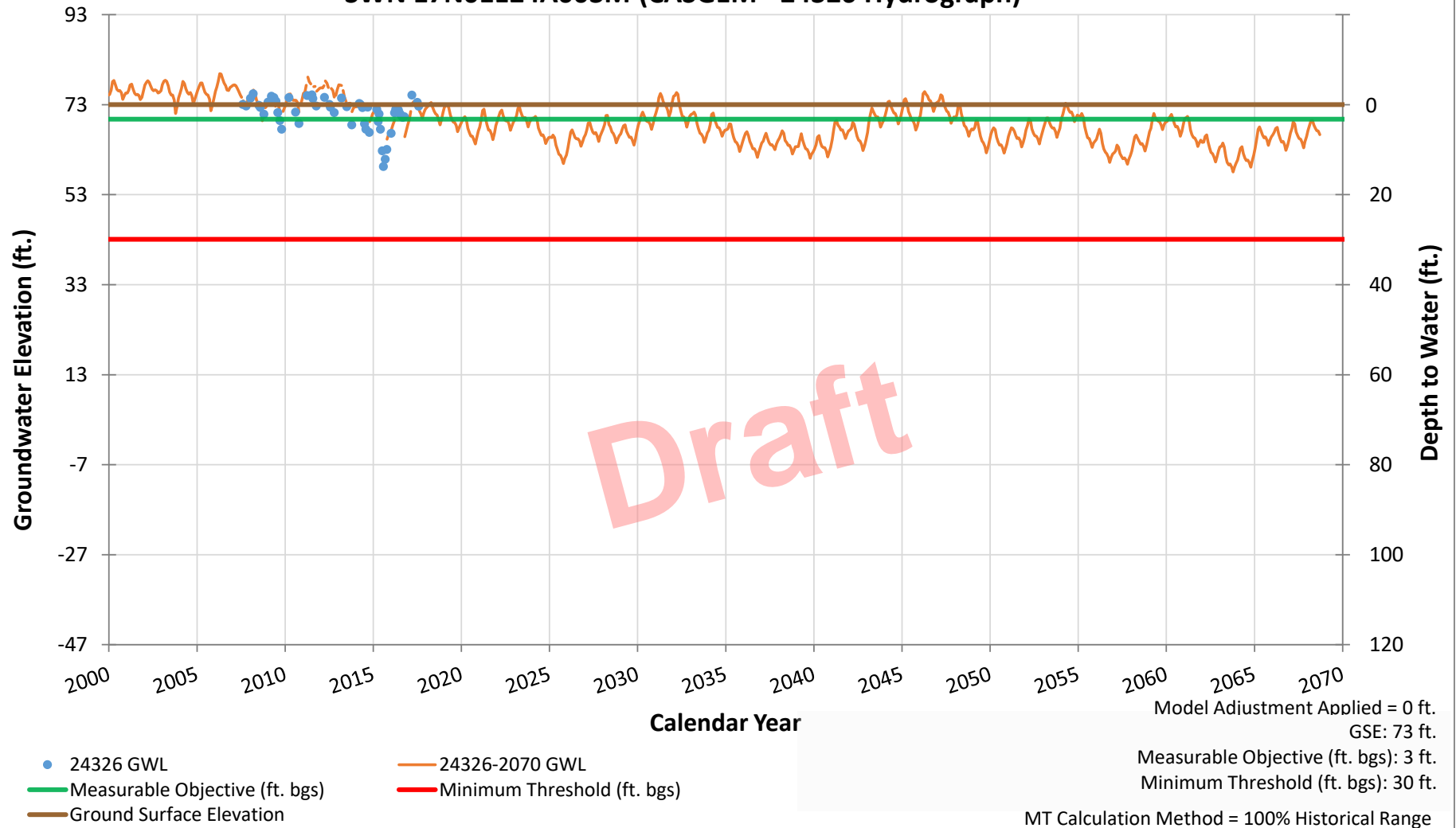


### SWN 19N02E13Q003M (CASGEM - 24321 Hydrograph)

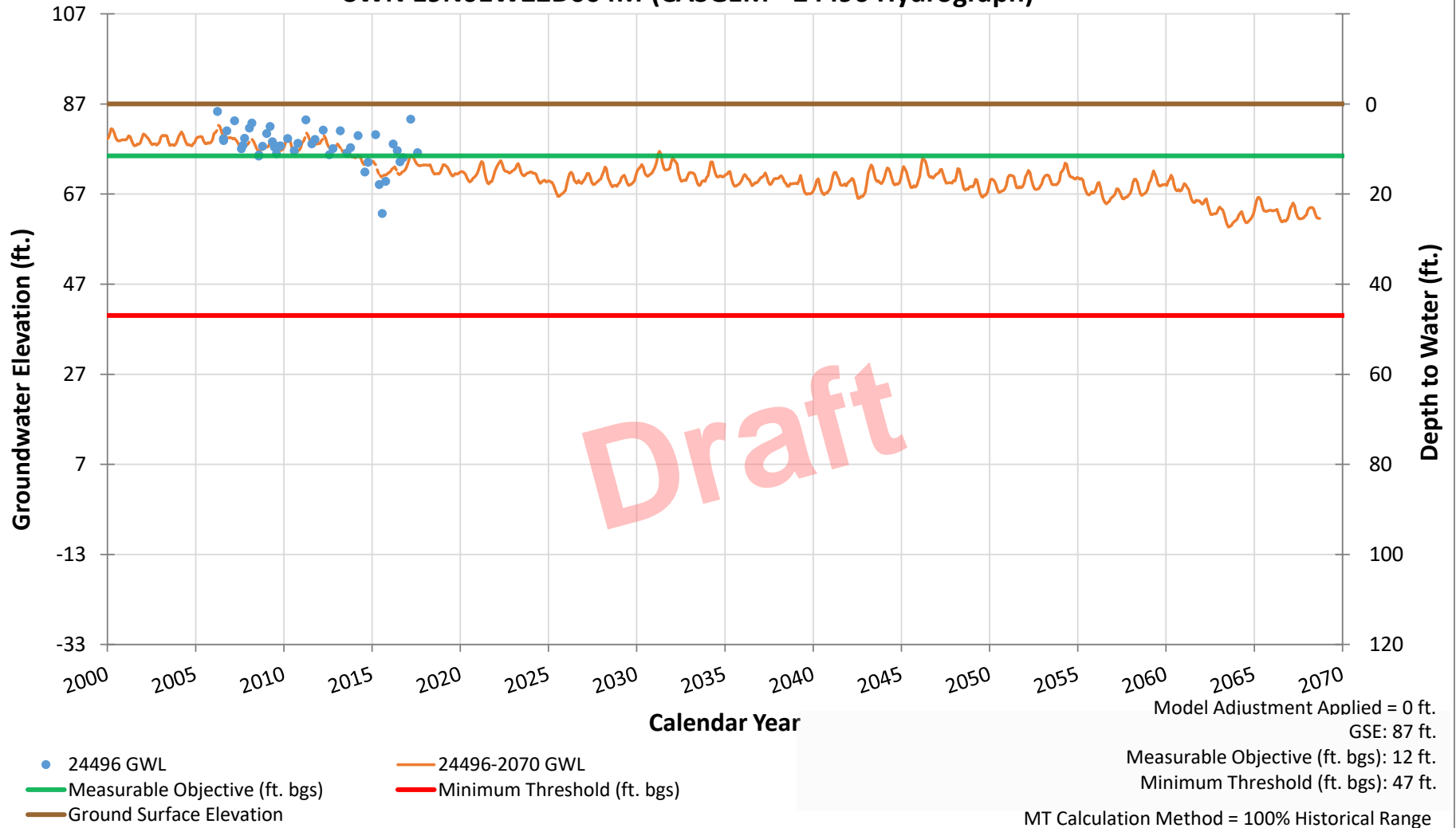




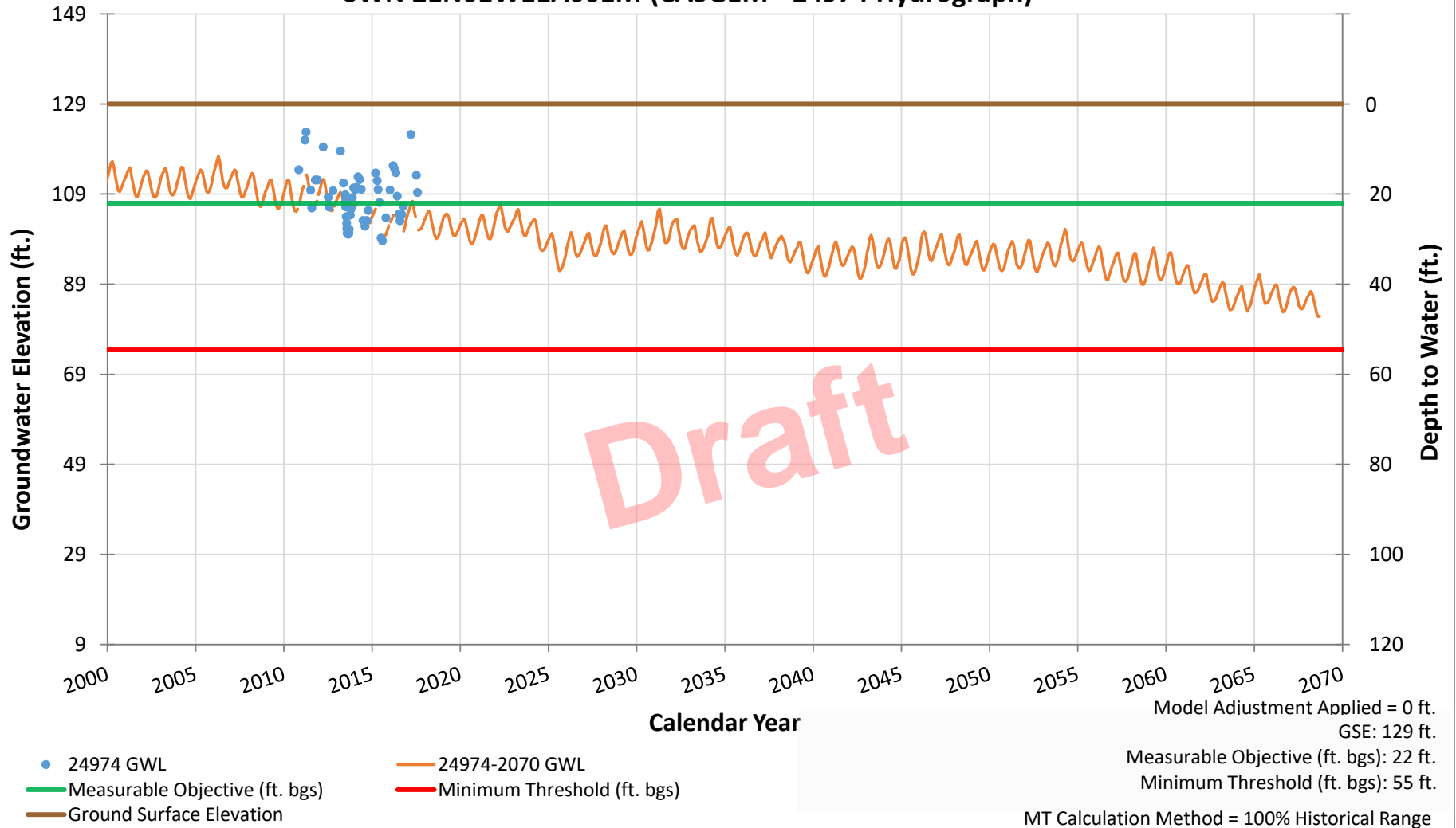
### SWN 17N01E24A003M (CASGEM - 24326 Hydrograph)



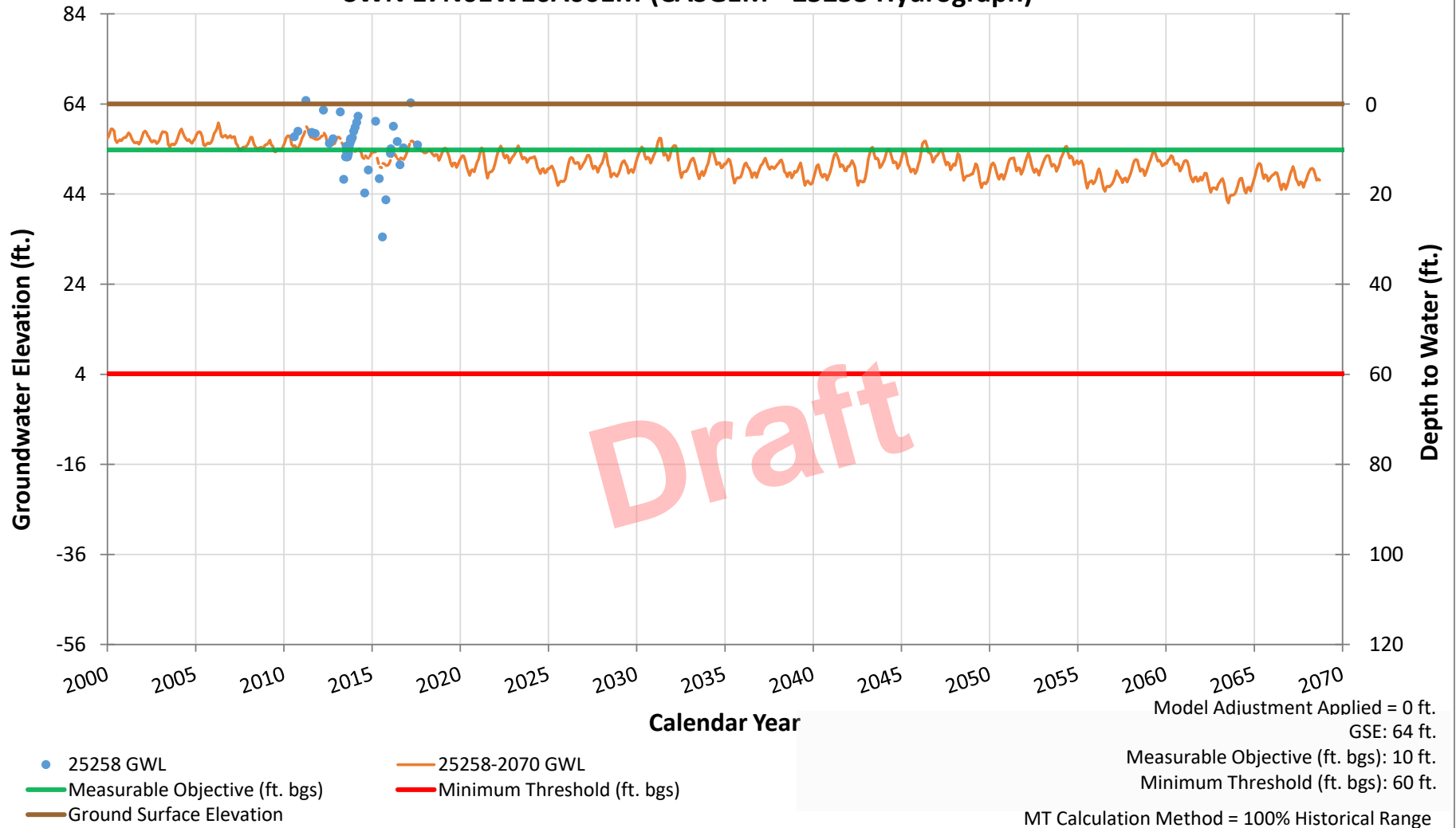
### SWN 19N01W22D004M (CASGEM - 24496 Hydrograph)



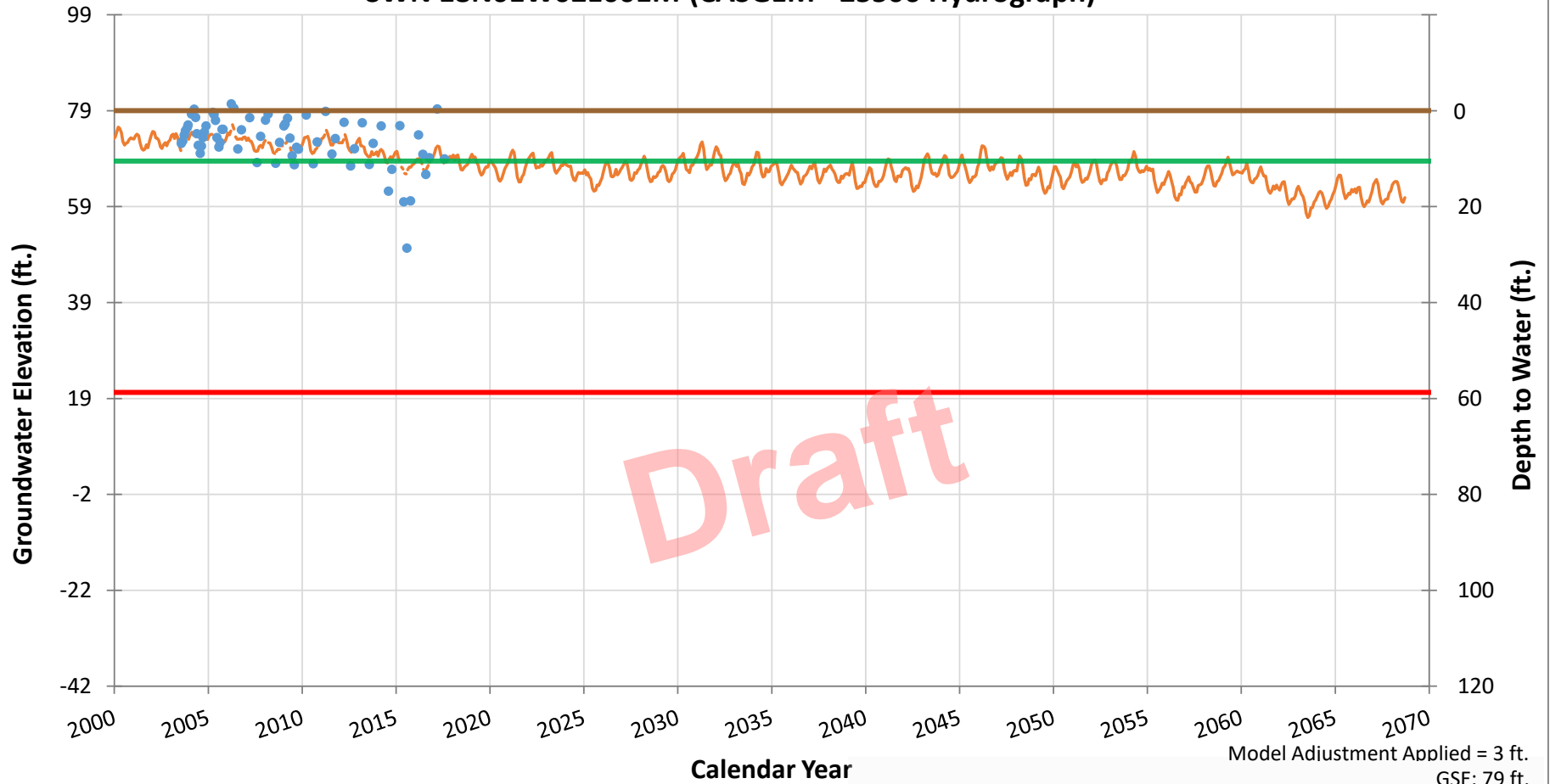
### SWN 21N01W11A001M (CASGEM - 24974 Hydrograph)



### SWN 17N01W10A001M (CASGEM - 25258 Hydrograph)



### SWN 18N01W02E001M (CASGEM - 25506 Hydrograph)

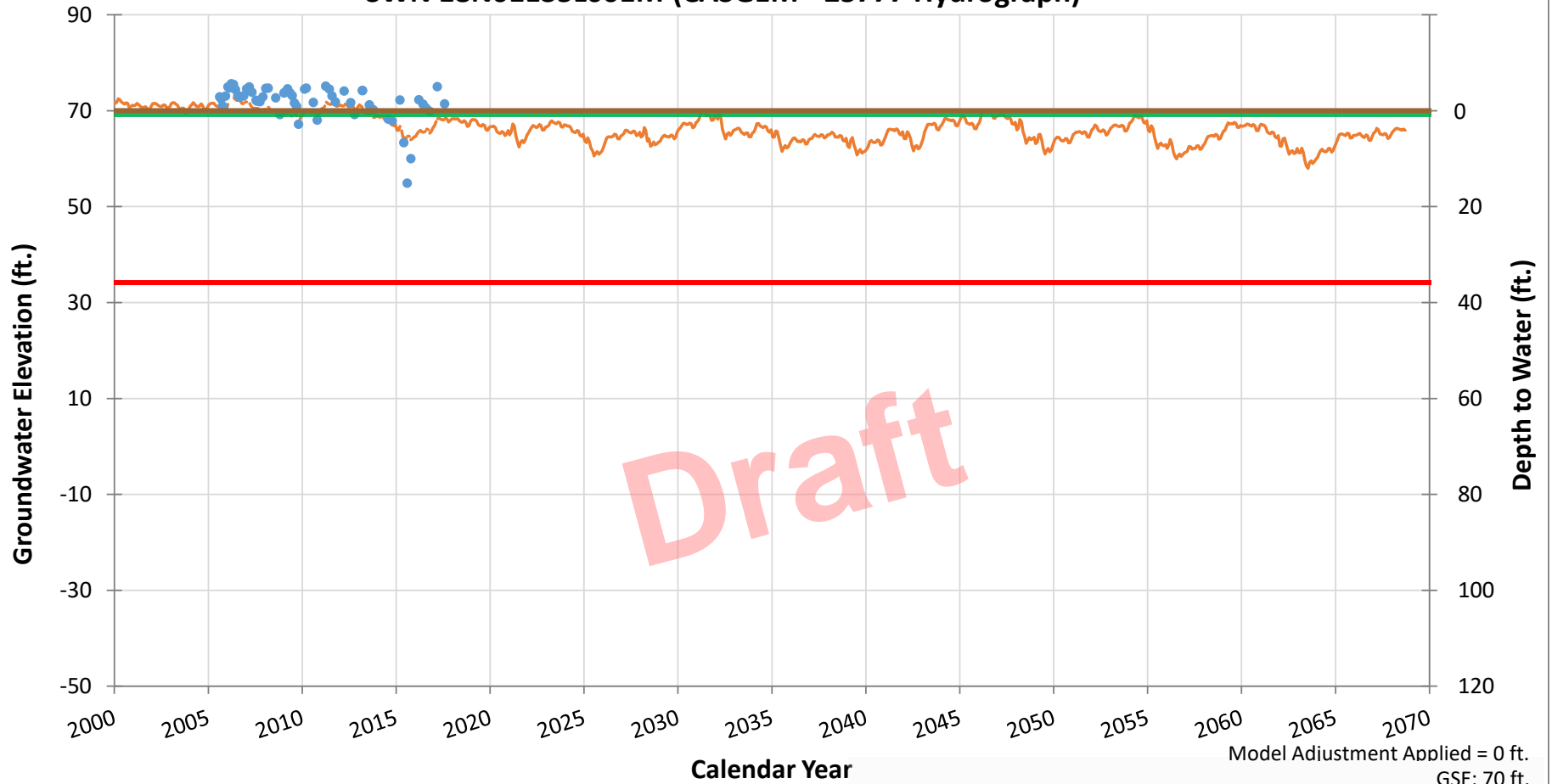


Model Adjustment Applied = 3 ft.  
GSE: 79 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 11 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 59 ft.

- 25506 GWL
- 25506-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 18N01E35L001M (CASGEM - 25777 Hydrograph)

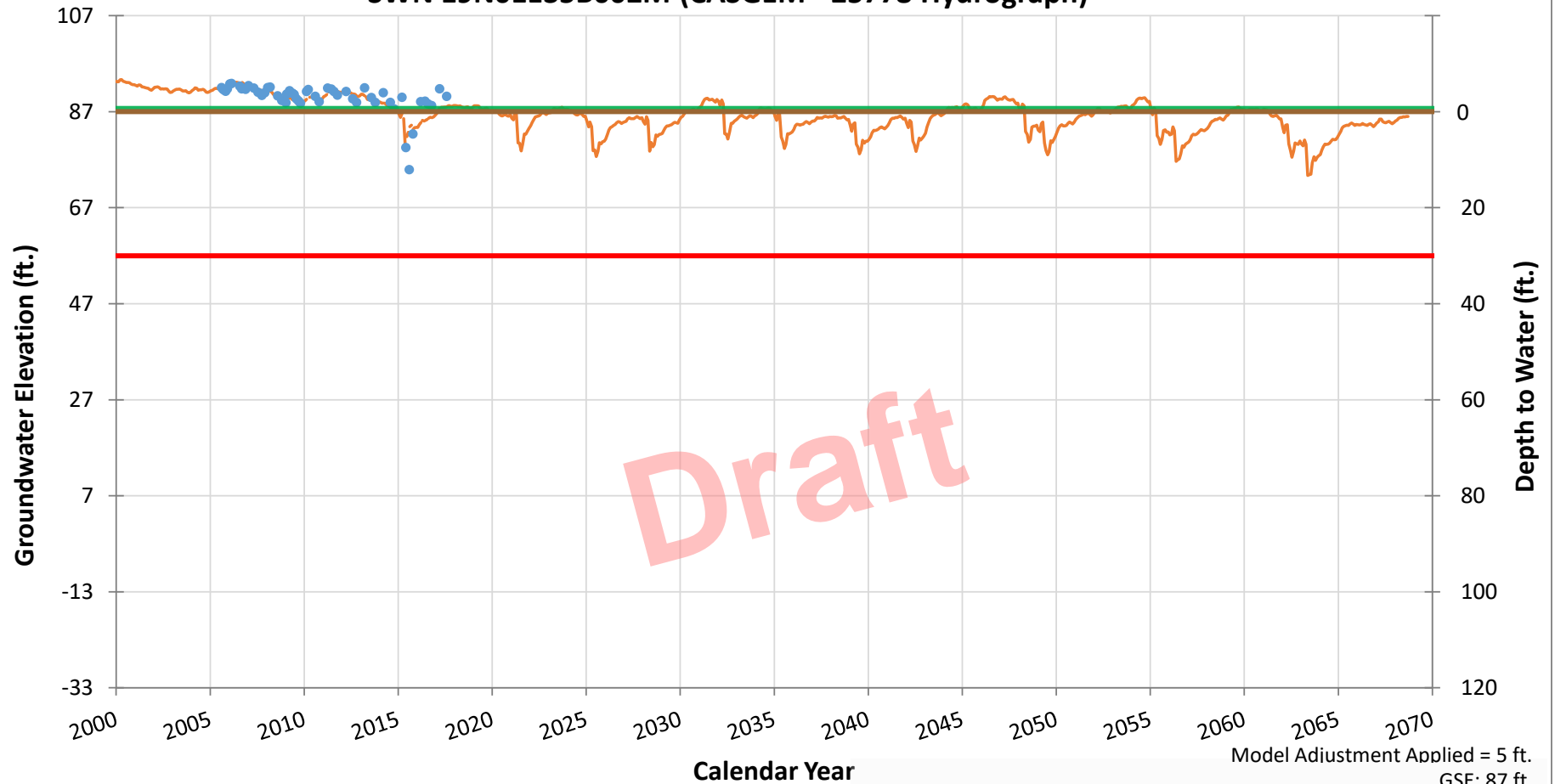


Model Adjustment Applied = 0 ft.  
GSE: 70 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): 1 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 36 ft.

MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

- 25777 GWL
- 25777-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

### SWN 19N01E35B002M (CASGEM - 25778 Hydrograph)

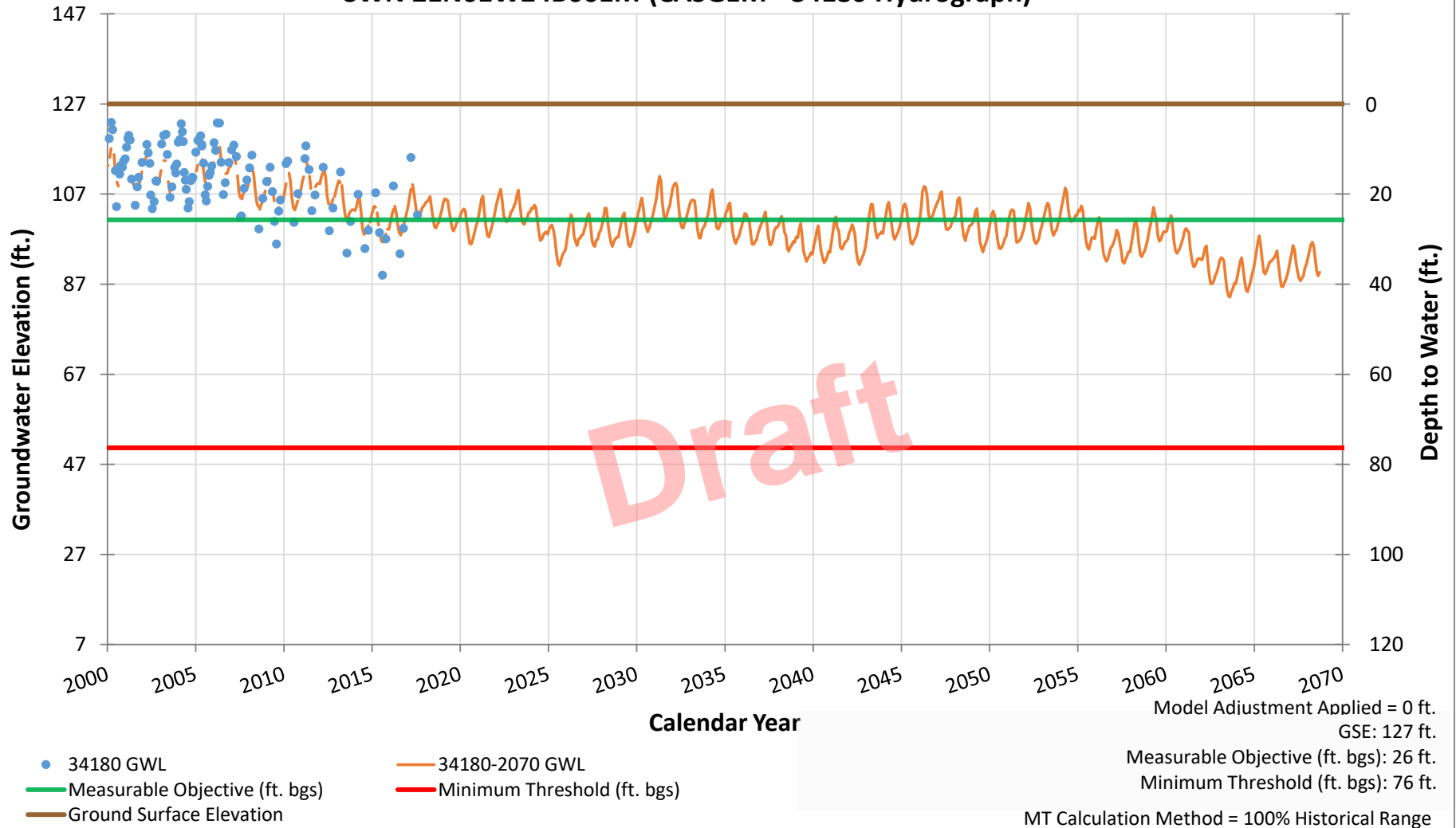


Model Adjustment Applied = 5 ft.  
GSE: 87 ft.  
Measurable Objective (ft. bgs): -1 ft.  
Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs): 30 ft.

- 25778 GWL
- 25778-2070 GWL
- Measurable Objective (ft. bgs)
- Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)
- Ground Surface Elevation

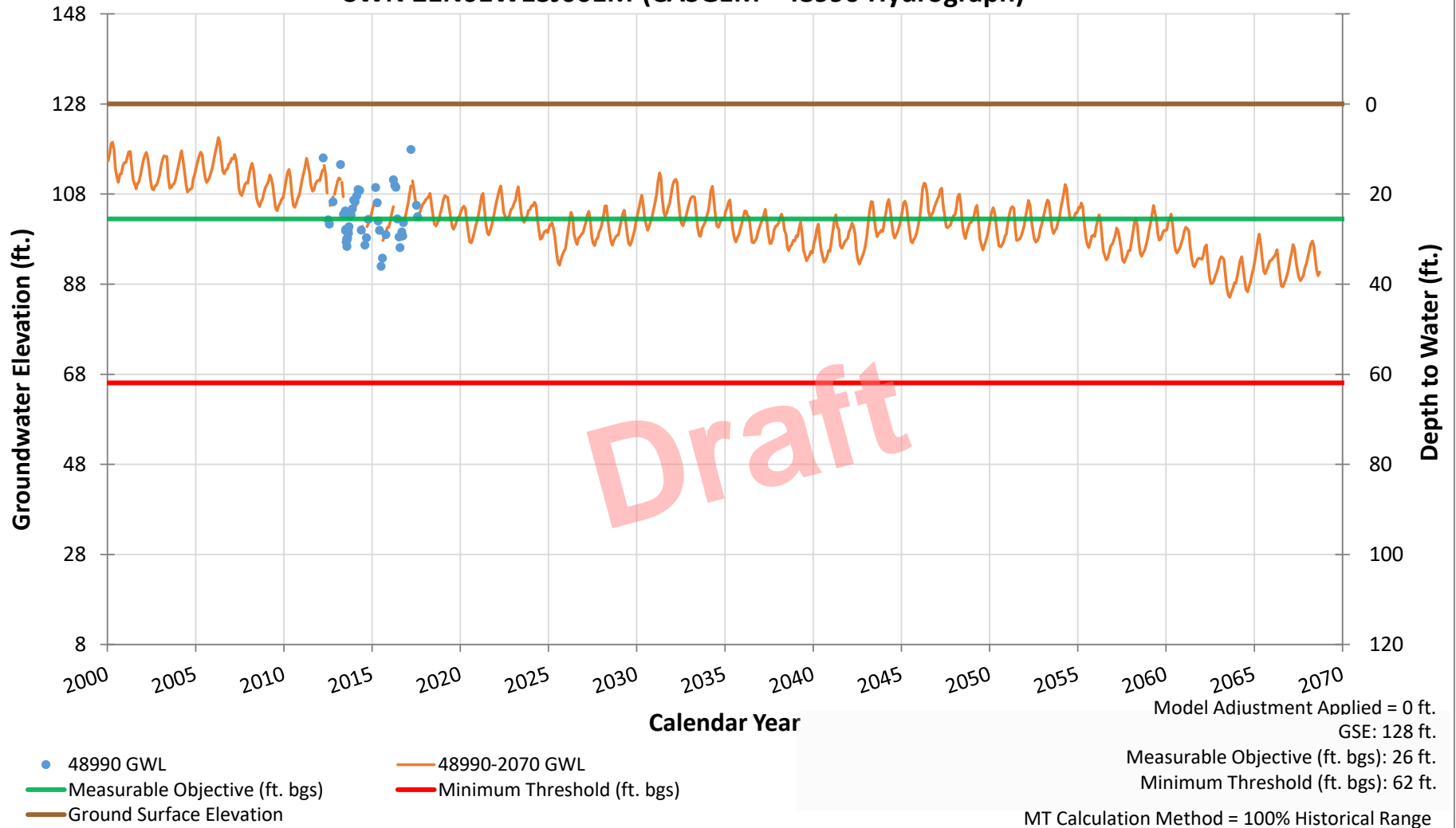
MT Calculation Method = 100% Historical Range

### SWN 21N01W24B001M (CASGEM - 34180 Hydrograph)





### SWN 21N01W13J001M (CASGEM - 48990 Hydrograph)



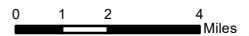
# Stream Depletion Representative Monitoring Network

Butte Subbasin GSP



## Analysis

- Between 2,000' and 7,280' from streams with total depth less than 150' bgs
- ▲ Between 2,000' and 7,280' from streams with top of screen above 100' bgs, and bottom of screen above 200' bgs
- Between 2,000' and 7,280' from streams with top of screen below 100' bgs or total depth greater than 150' bgs
- Between 2,000' and 7,280' from streams but no well construction data
- Less than 2,000' from streams
- Greater than 7,280' from streams



Map Created: April 2021

Third Party GIS Disclaimer: This map is for reference and graphical purposes only and should not be relied upon by third parties for any legal decisions. Any reliance upon the map or data contained herein shall be at the users' sole risk. **Data Sources:**

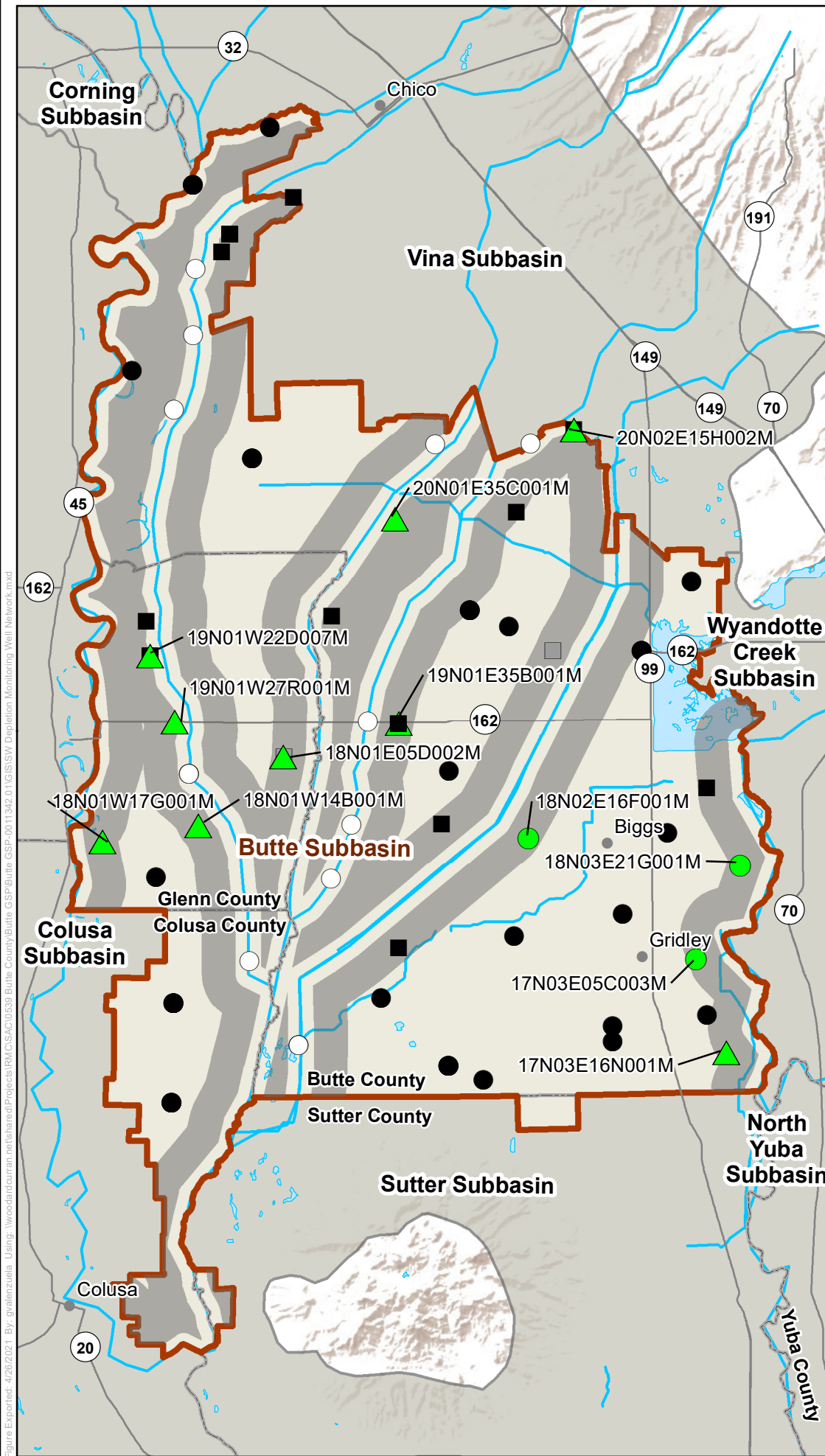
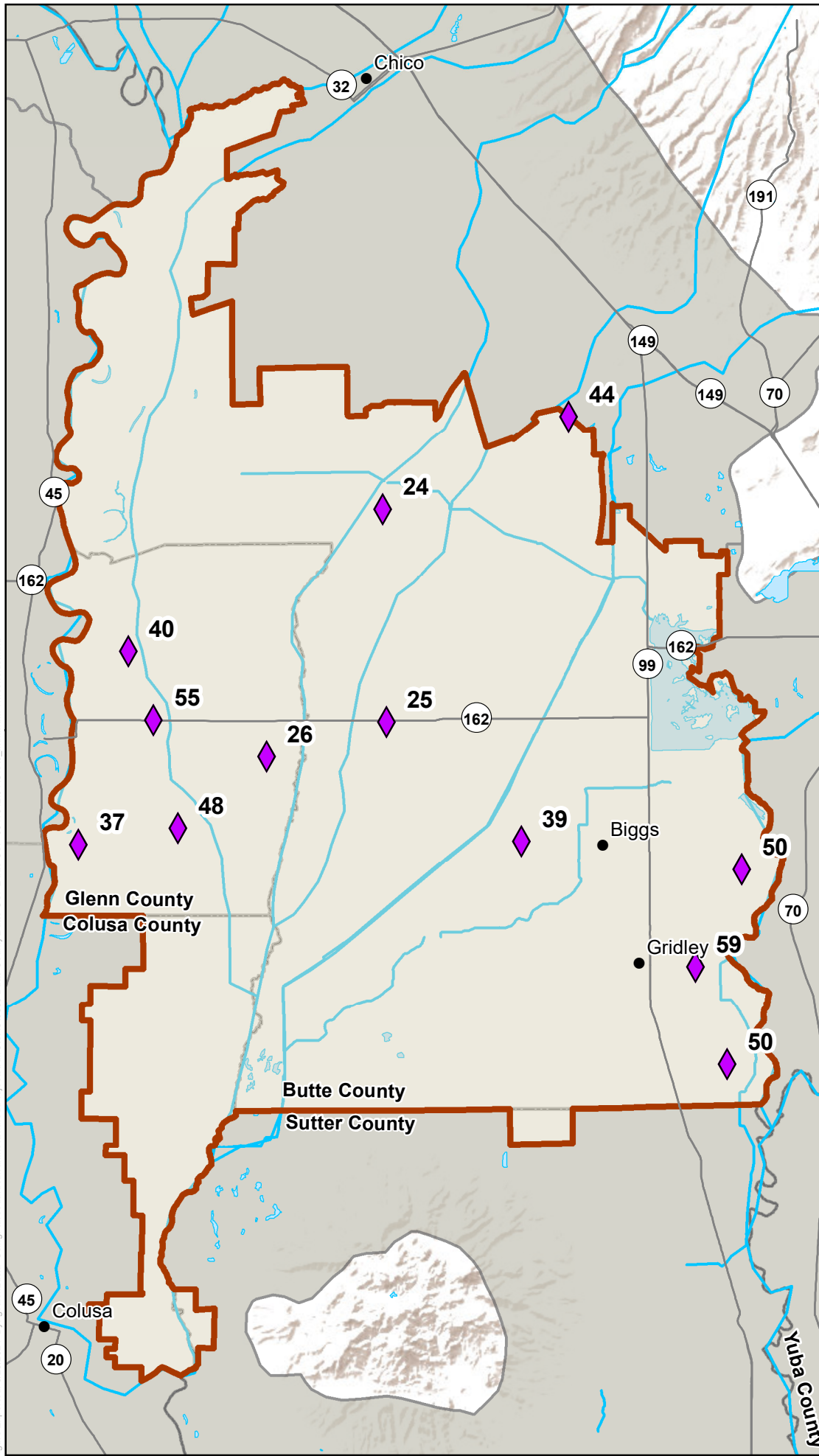


Figure Exported: 4/26/2021 By: gvalenzuela Using: \\woodardcurran.net\share\Projects\RMCSAC\0539 Butte County\Butte GSP\Butte GSP-0011342\_01GIS\SW Depletion Monitoring Well Network.mxd

Figure Exported: 5/28/2021 8:51:34 AM Using: \\woodardcurran.net\share\Projects\RMCSAC\6539 Butte County\Butte County\Butte GSP\Butte GSP-011342\_01GIS\6\_Minimum\_Thresholds.mxd



### Minimum Thresholds (Interconnected Surface Water) Representative Monitoring Network)

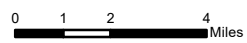
Butte Subbasin GSP



- Cities
- Canals
- State Highways
- Butte Subbasin
- Counties
- Neighboring Subbasins
- Lake

#### Methodology

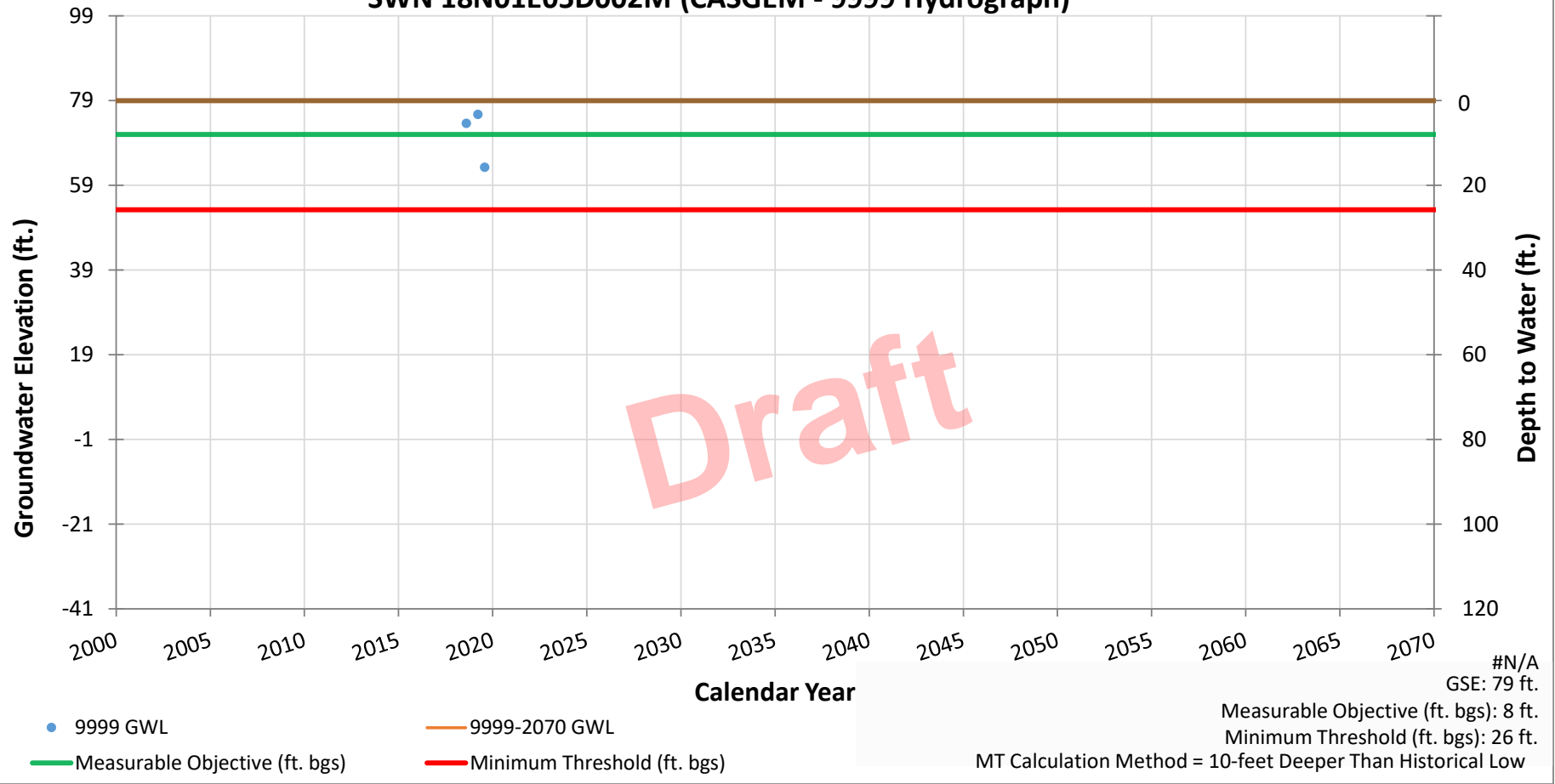
- 10-feet Deeper Than Historical Low
- ## Minimum Threshold (ft. bgs)



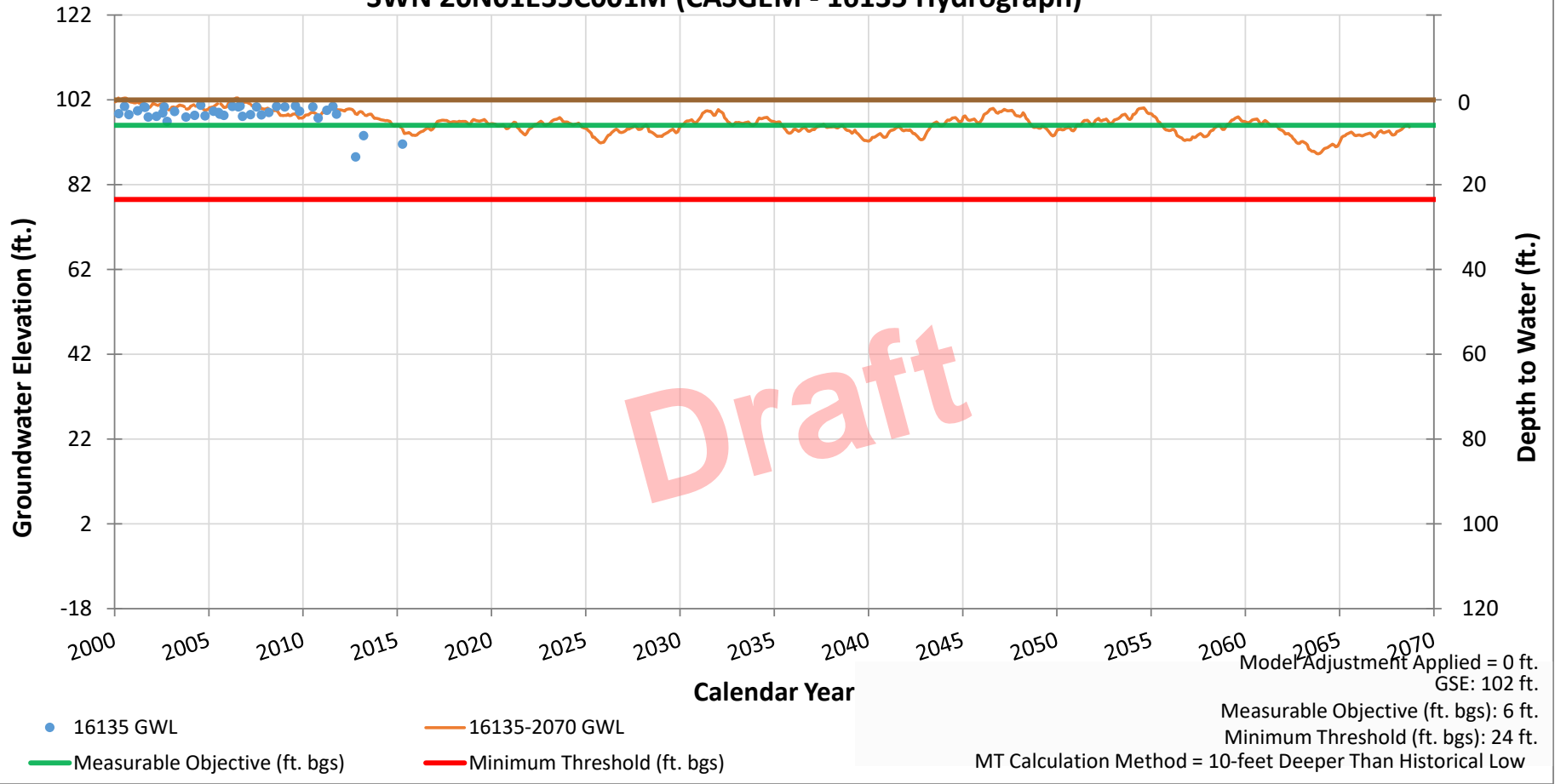
Map Created: May 2021

Third Party GIS Disclaimer: This map is for reference and graphical purposes only and should not be relied upon by third parties for any legal decisions. Any reliance upon the map or data contained herein shall be at the users' sole risk. **Data Sources:**

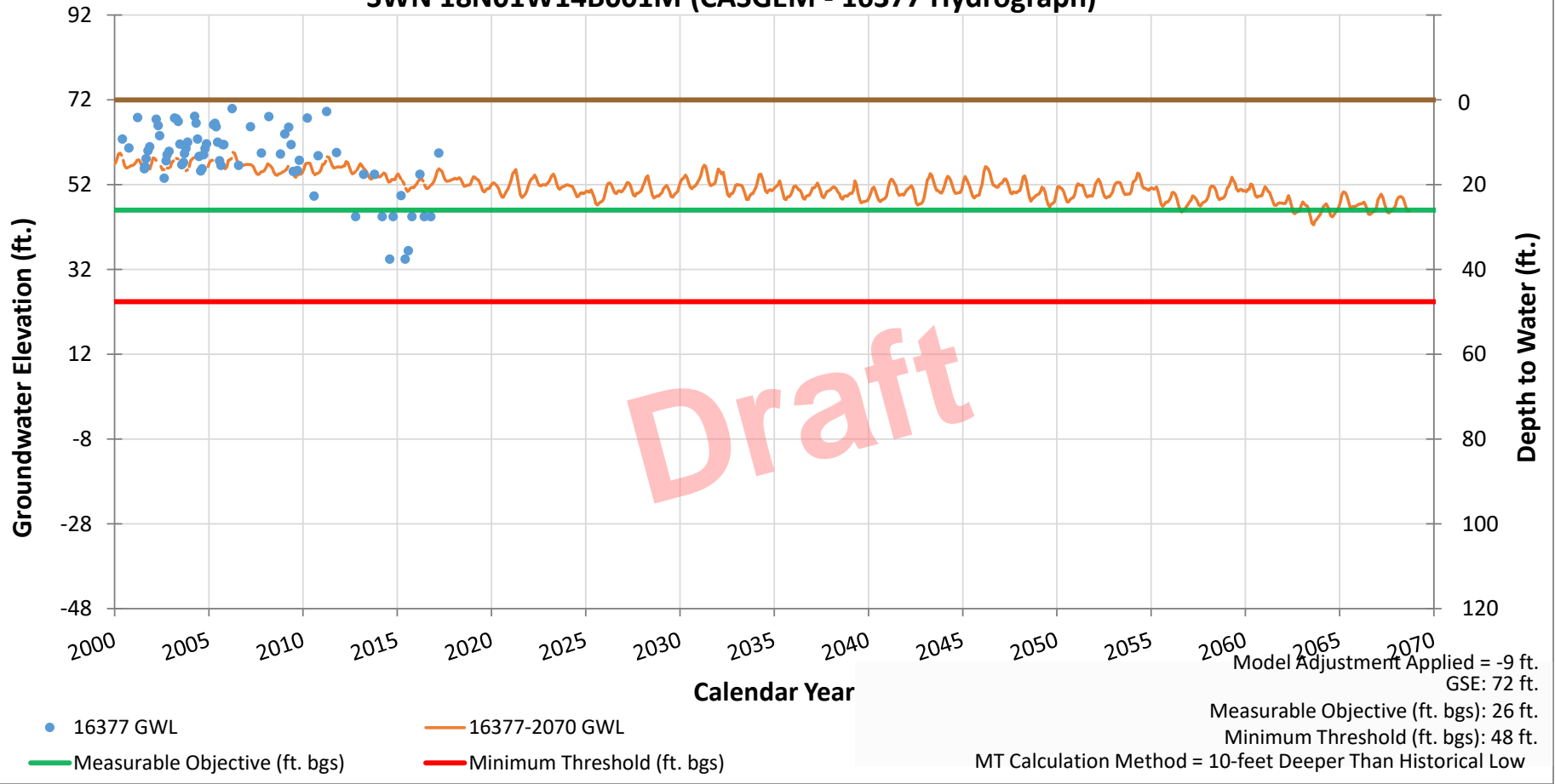
### SWN 18N01E05D002M (CASGEM - 9999 Hydrograph)



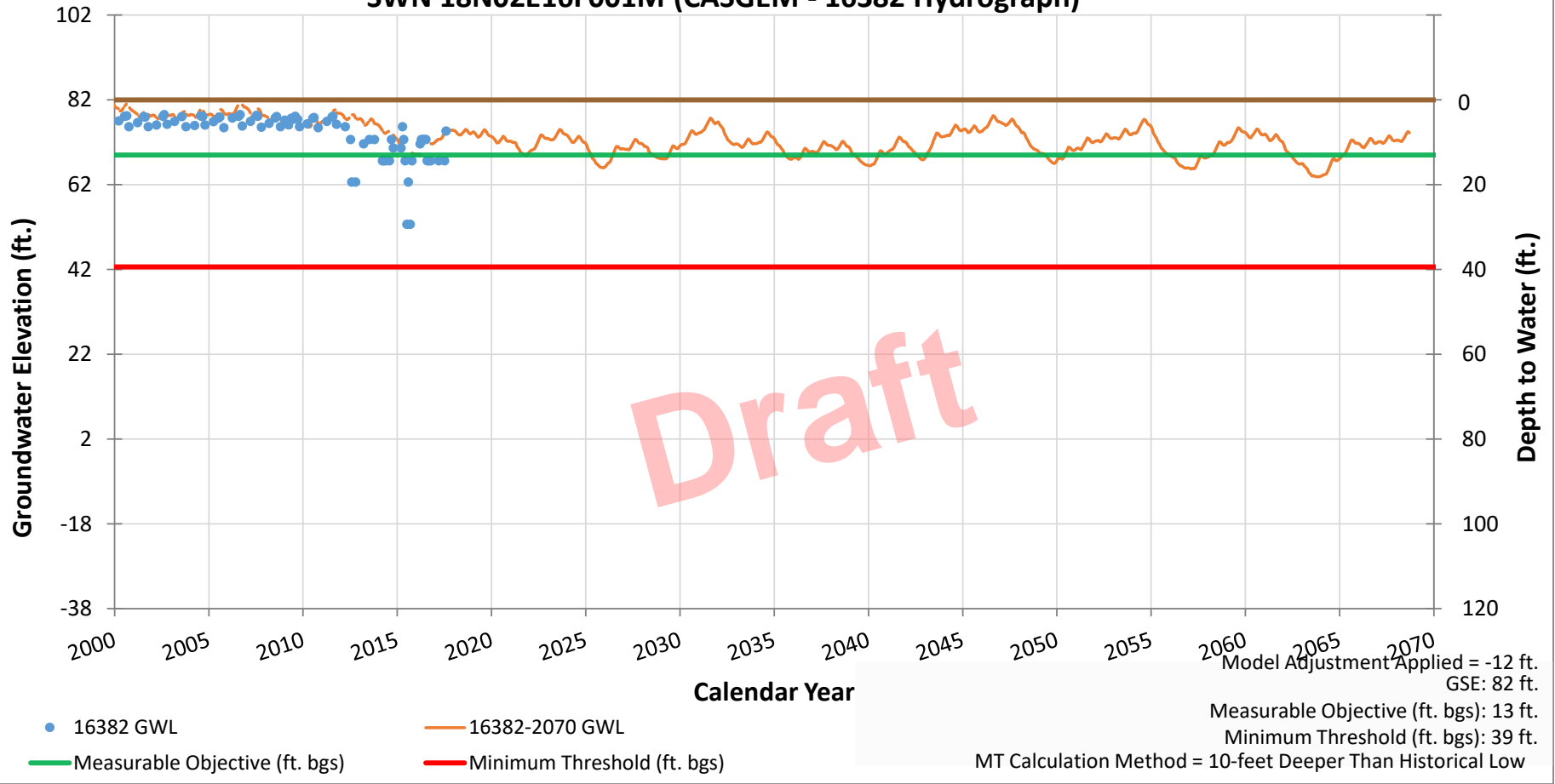
### SWN 20N01E35C001M (CASGEM - 16135 Hydrograph)



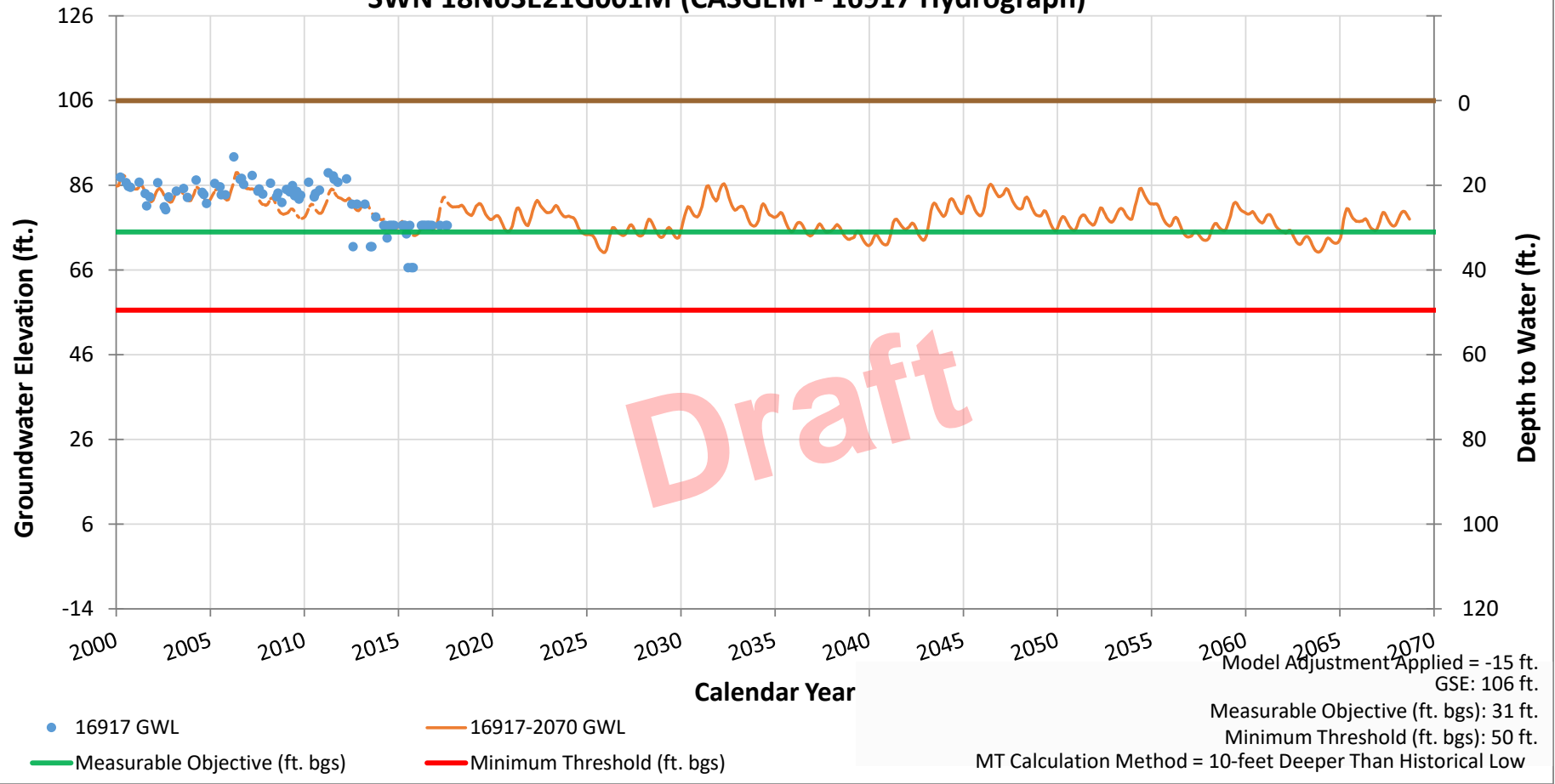
### SWN 18N01W14B001M (CASGEM - 16377 Hydrograph)



### SWN 18N02E16F001M (CASGEM - 16382 Hydrograph)

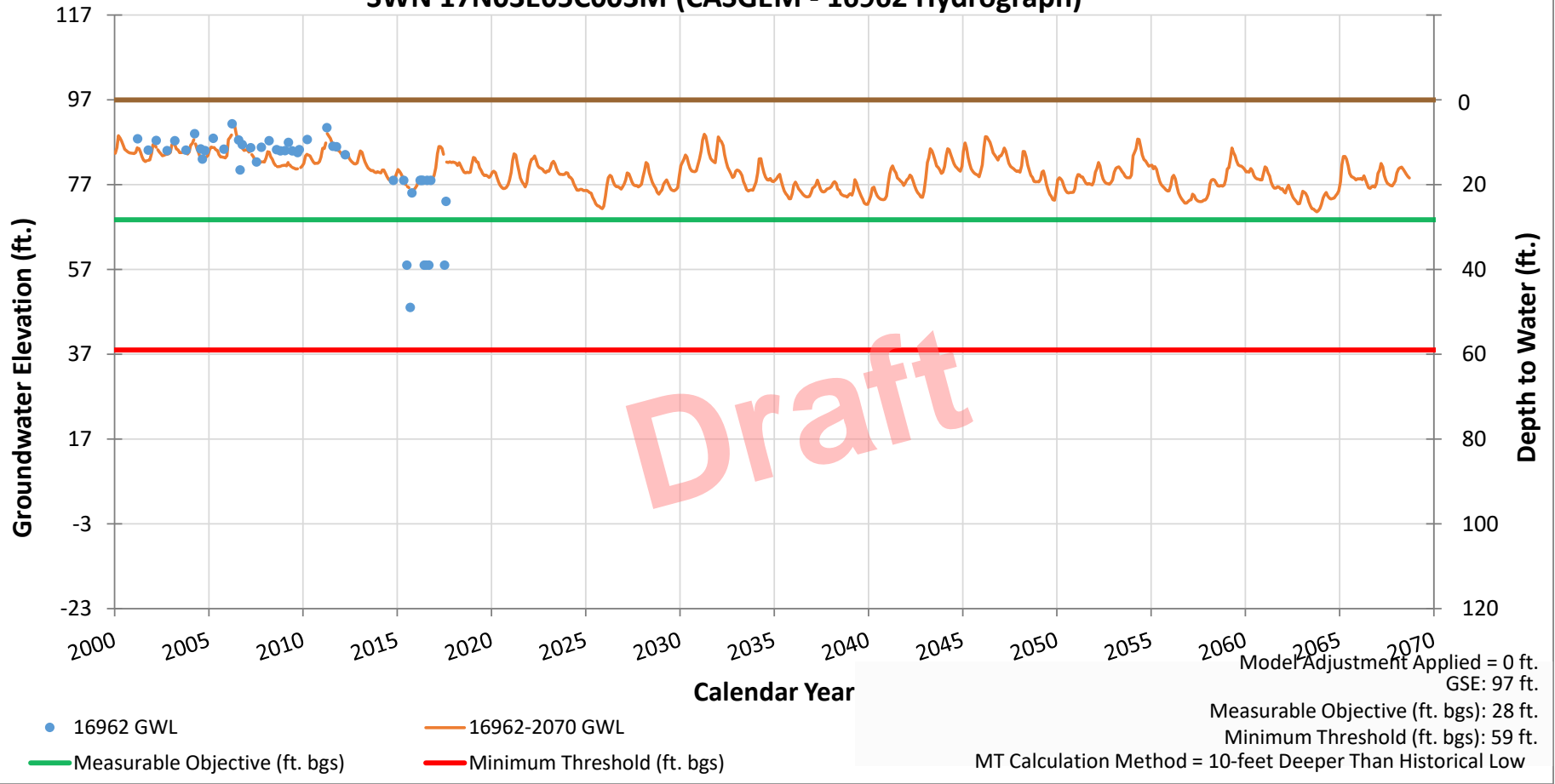


### SWN 18N03E21G001M (CASGEM - 16917 Hydrograph)

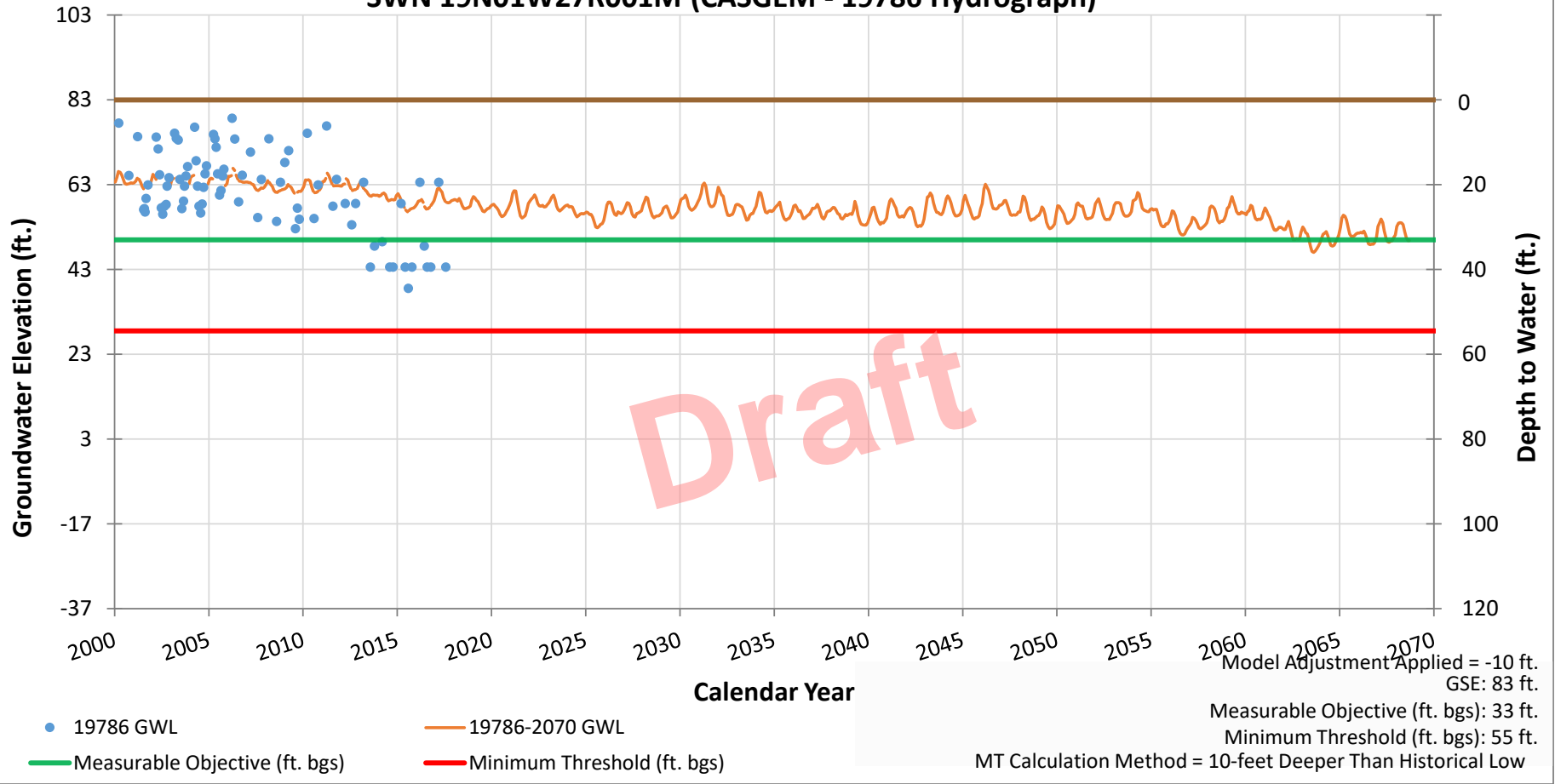




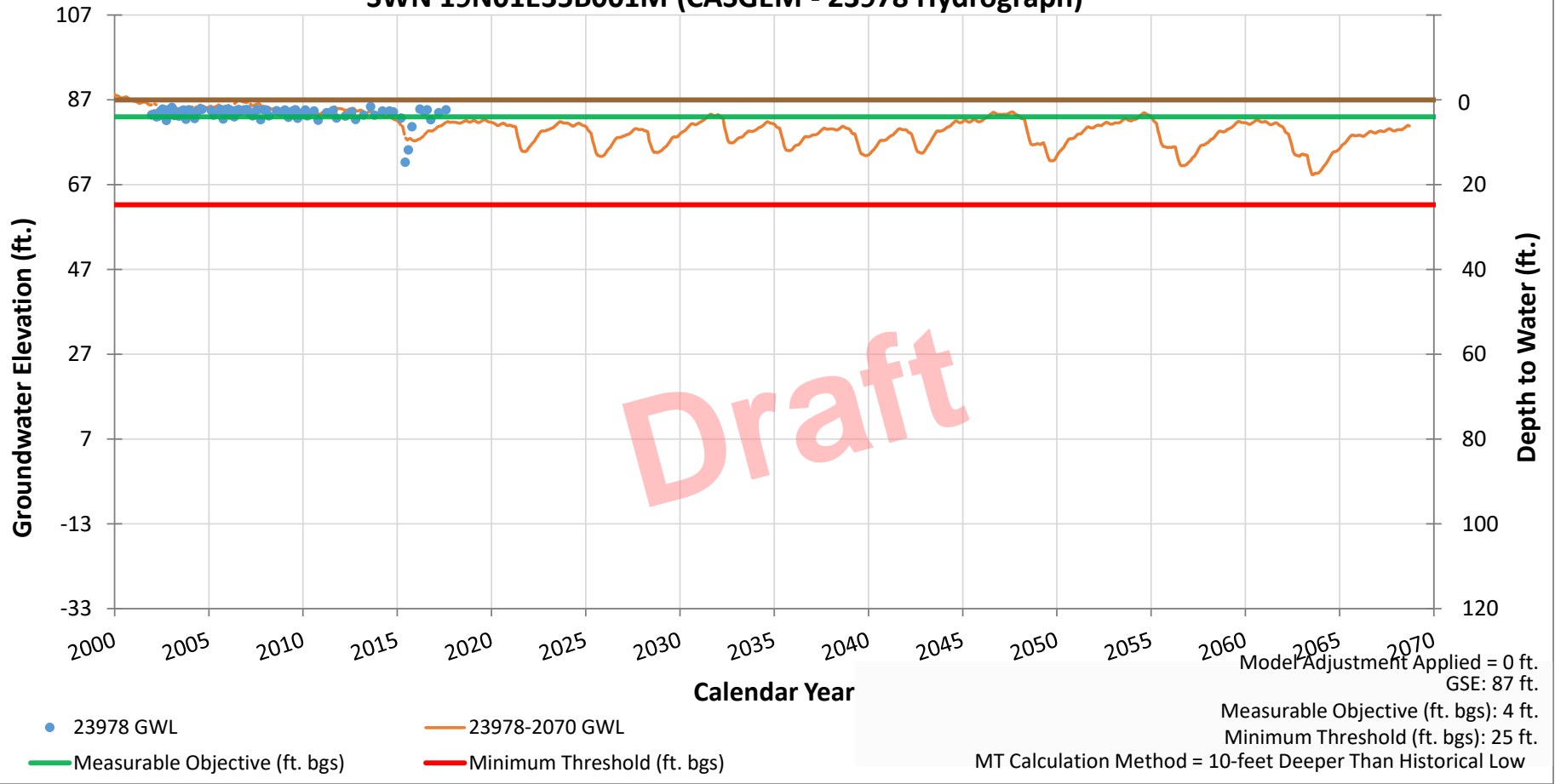
### SWN 17N03E05C003M (CASGEM - 16962 Hydrograph)



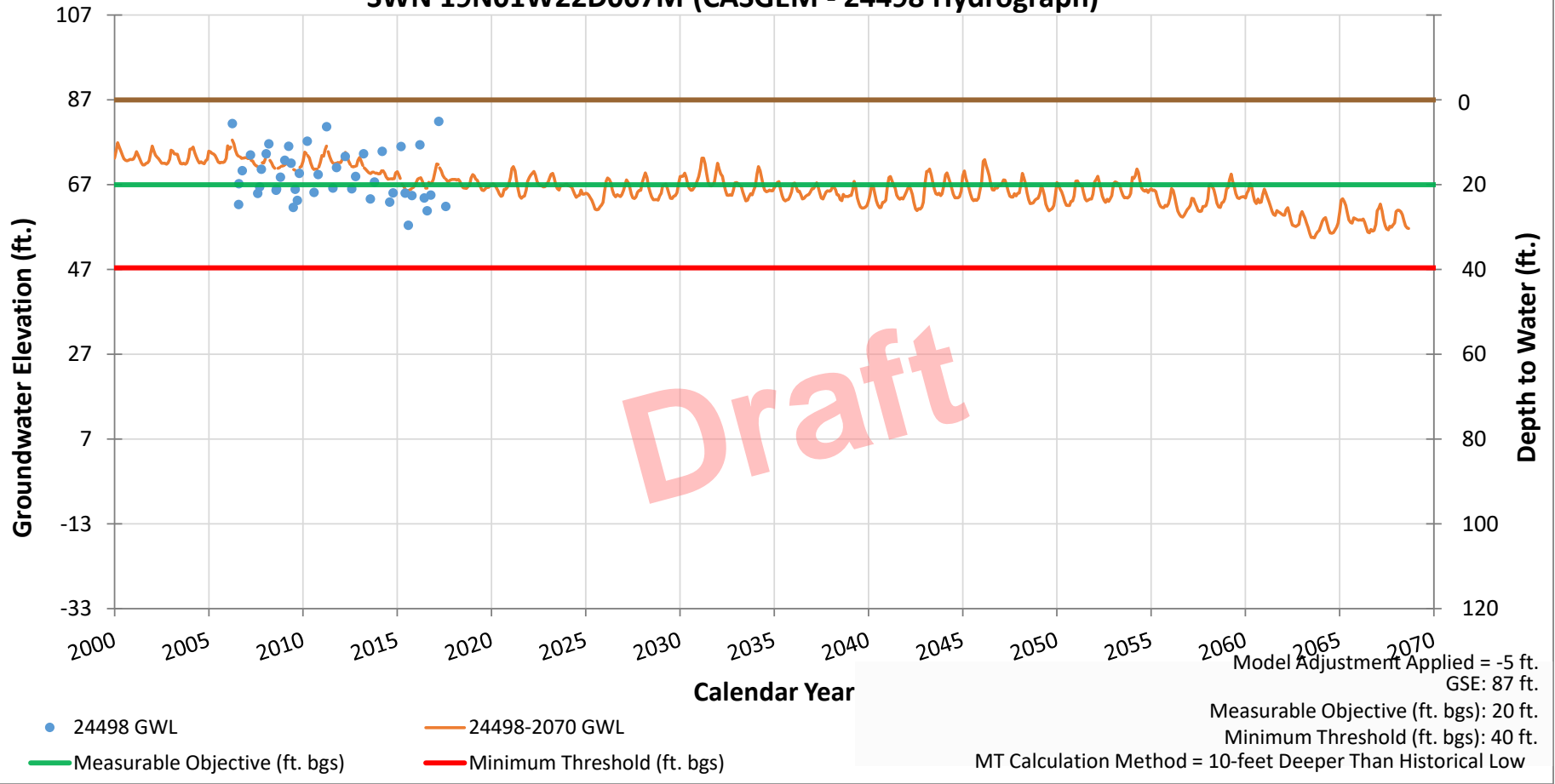
### SWN 19N01W27R001M (CASGEM - 19786 Hydrograph)



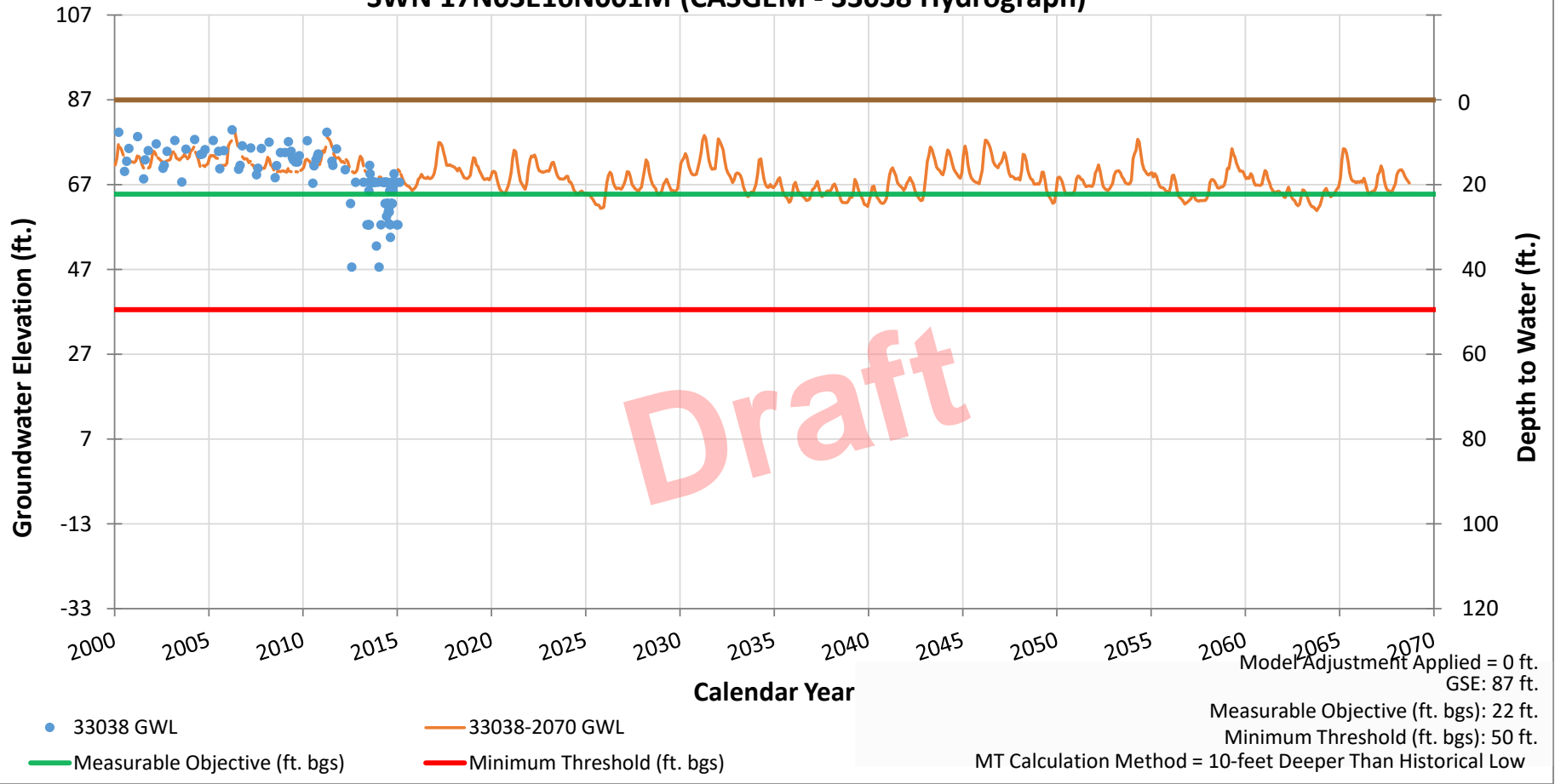
### SWN 19N01E35B001M (CASGEM - 23978 Hydrograph)



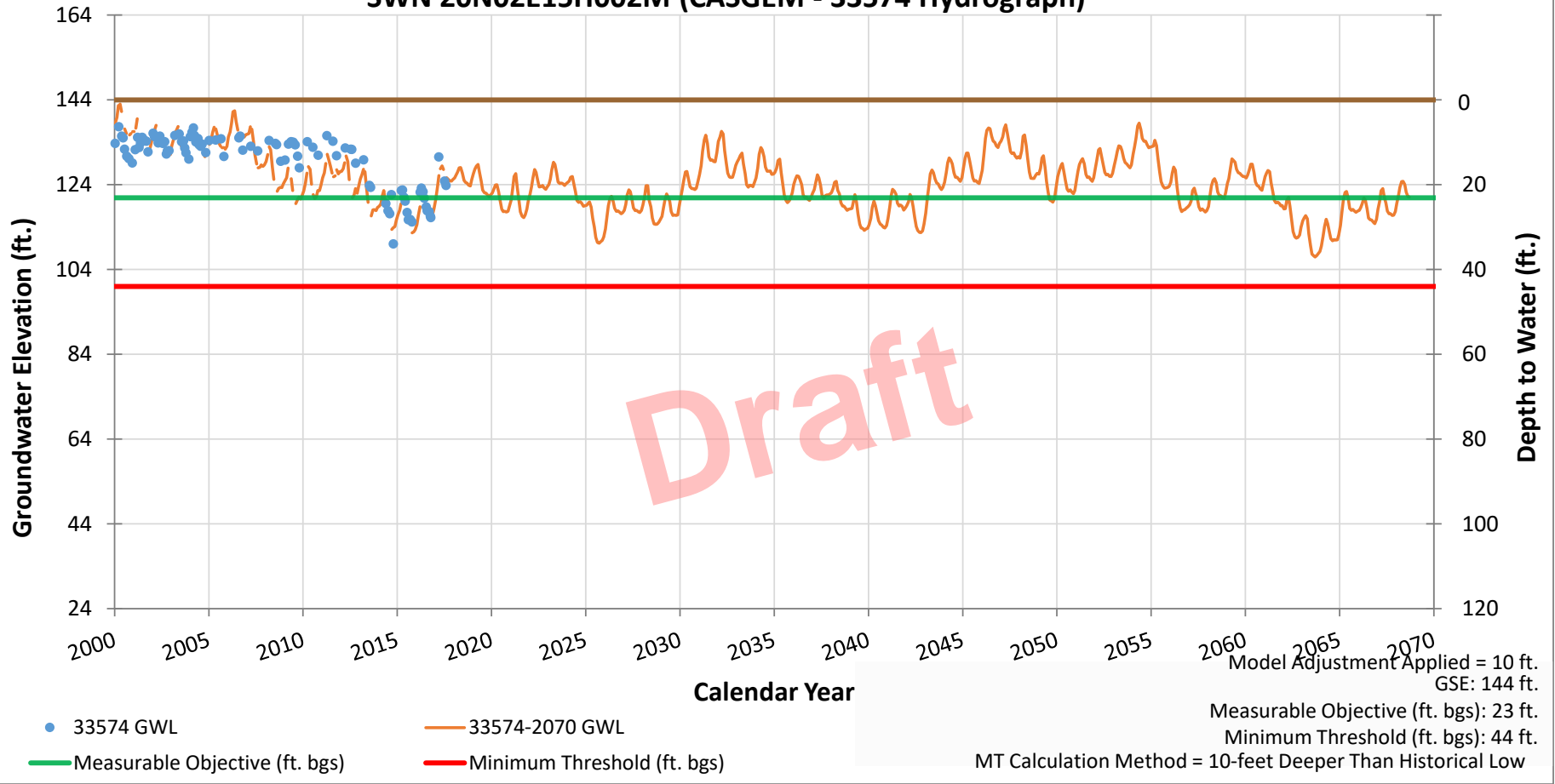
### SWN 19N01W22D007M (CASGEM - 24498 Hydrograph)



### SWN 17N03E16N001M (CASGEM - 33038 Hydrograph)



### SWN 20N02E15H002M (CASGEM - 33574 Hydrograph)



### SWN 18N01W17G001M (CASGEM - 40068 Hydrograph)

