

LOUISIANA WATER RESOURCES COMMISSION

Monday, August 17th, 2015

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Update on Groundwater Management Across the State—

Matthew Reonas, Office of Conservation

Legislative Recap

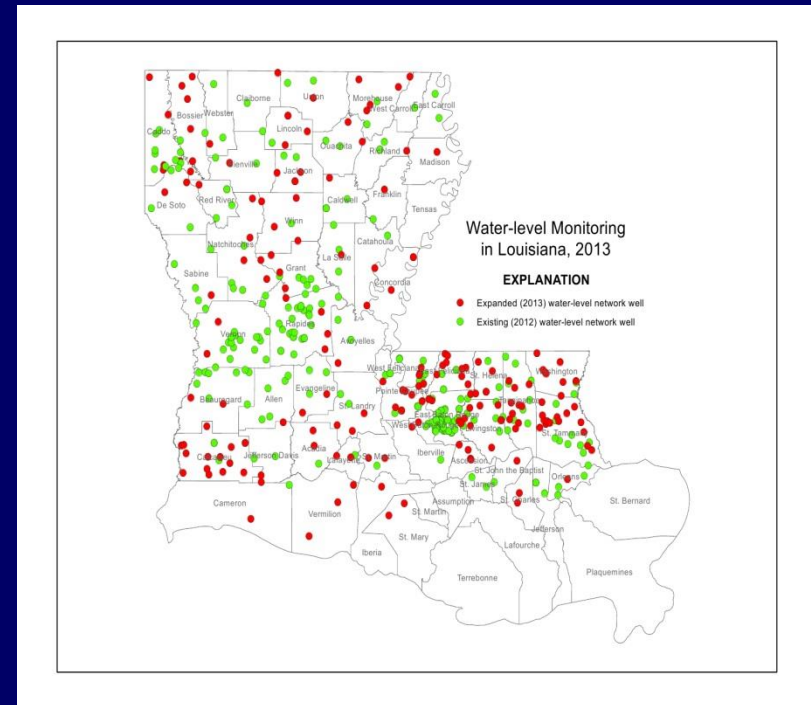
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- ❑ Act 34 – Expands power and authority of Bayou LaFourche Fresh Water District
- ❑ Act 401 – Removes references to, provisions for, and the powers, functions, and duties of the Allen Parish Reservoir District and the Ouachita Parish Reservoir District, along with their respective boards of commissioners
- ❑ Act 402 – Delineates boundary between state-owned and privately-owned land around False River in Pointe Coupee Parish
- ❑ Act 442 – Changes name of Lafayette Parish Bayou Vermilion District to Bayou Vermilion District, authorizes district to perform work to improve water quality and to remove obstructions to natural water flow in Bayou Vermilion within Lafayette Parish and Bayou Carencro
- ❑ Act 450 – Provides exception from financial disclosure requirements for members of certain boards and commissions that do not earn compensation or per diem

One Year Extension of Funding for Statewide Groundwater Monitoring Network

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- ❑ Expanded network highlighted as a critical need in the 2012 report to the Legislature
- ❑ DNR able to secure three years of funding through the Federal Petroleum Violation Escrow (PVE) account, 2013-2015
- ❑ Program includes roughly 350 new monitor wells for water level, chlorides, and water quality; annual water use statistics; and revision of potentiometric maps; work conducted through agreement with U.S. Geological Survey
- ❑ Also includes expanded surface water monitoring through agreement with La. Geological Survey
- ❑ Have applied for temporary funding to carry “bare bones” of program through June 2016



Water level monitoring in Louisiana. Existing to expanded network, 2012-2013. Source: USGS

Efforts to Expand Water Well Ownership Transfers and Registration – Meeting with La. Real Estate Commission

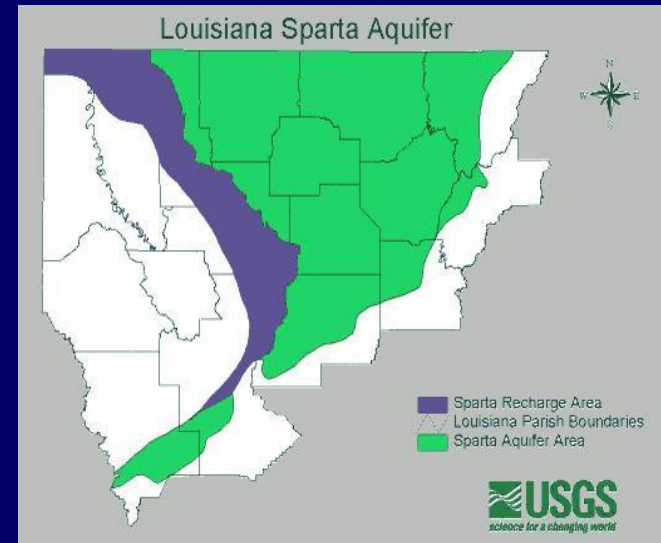
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- ❑ Unknown number of un-registered, un-documented water wells in La.
- ❑ OC staff met with the La. Real Estate Commn. in April to discuss
- ❑ Even with properly registered wells, property transfers do not equate with well ownership transfers/updates to the Office of Conservation
- ❑ Two key suggestions considered: reviewing property transfers and reviewing records of parish health offices (neither feasible)
- ❑ Experience during south Caddo groundwater emergency situation highlighted communication issues
- ❑ Agreed to consider hosting well ownership transfer document on website under non-mandatory documents and also to assist in education of real estate agents
- ❑ Need to find creative ways of expanding water well registration within the limits of the law was a recommendation in the 2012 report to the Legislature
- ❑ Next Steps: Complete educational document; also vet with Home Inspectors Board

Groundwater Areas of Concern and Emergencies – Sparta Aquifer

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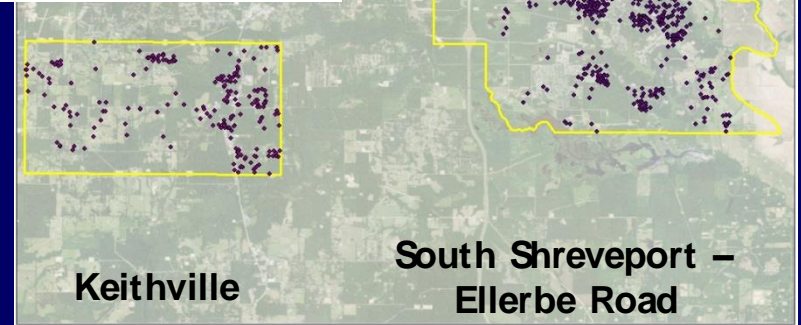
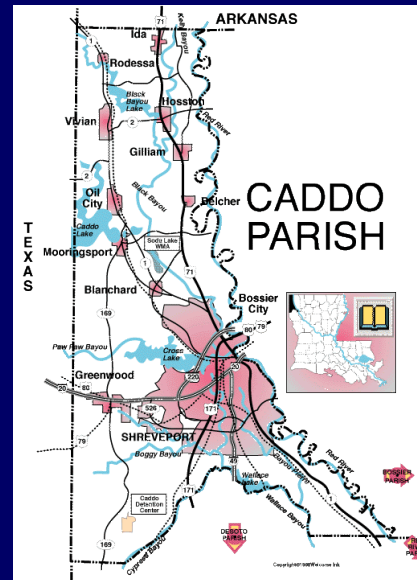
- ❑ Sparta Aquifer in north central Louisiana provides public supply for about 250,000 people
- ❑ Major management issue: Declining groundwater levels; improvement
- ❑ Three Areas of Groundwater Concern (Ruston-Lincoln Parish; Jonesboro-Hodge; Monroe-West Monroe)
- ❑ Non-domestic Sparta Aquifer wells in the Areas of Concern submit monthly usage reports
- ❑ Improvement in levels since 2005



Groundwater Areas of Concern and Emergencies – South Caddo Parish

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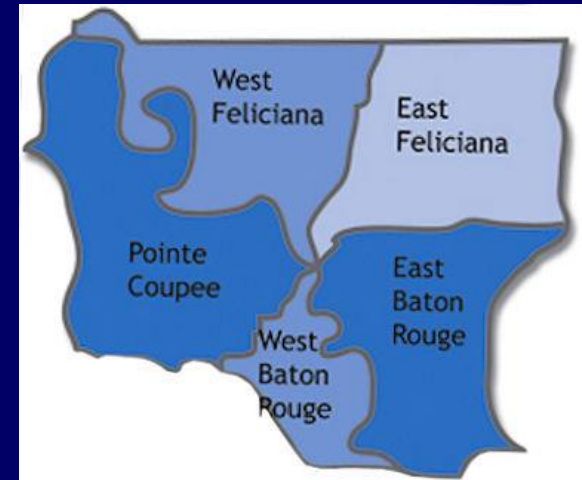
- ❑ Groundwater Emergency declared in Sept. 2011 in response to localized conditions during drought
- ❑ 1086 total wells; 947 domestic wells
- ❑ Observation wells monitored by USGS and Red River Watershed Management Institute
- ❑ Sufficient improvement to ease some usage restrictions in July 2014
- ❑ Monitoring continues



Baton Rouge Area – Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District

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- ❑ Five parish district including EBR, WBR, East and West Feliciana, Point Coupee
- ❑ About 527,000 people (11% of total state population)
- ❑ EBR counts 446,000 people (85% of District total) and consumes approximately 89% of all groundwater used in the District, about 150 million gallons a day



Baton Rouge Area – Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District

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- ❑ Major management issue: saltwater encroachment across the Baton Rouge Fault in EBR; discussed in 2012 WRC report to the Legislature
- ❑ Front-line management by Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission, including representatives of parish governments, relevant state agencies, public supply, and industry (Office of Conservation membership began in Dec. 2012)
- ❑ Commission has extensive authority to manage groundwater use and pursue any and all activities to prevent or remediate saltwater encroachment and/or subsidence, including limiting use and imposing pumpage fees for administration and special projects



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Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District – Recent Management Actions

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- ❑ Caps on groundwater withdrawals from 1500- and 2000-foot sands
- ❑ Comprehensive 10-year study with U.S. Geological Survey to model groundwater flow and saltwater intrusion in all local aquifers
- ❑ Funding additional research into the aquifer system's hydrology and architecture with LSU scientists
- ❑ Approved “ scavenger well” in 1500-foot sand to protect major public supply well field of Baton Rouge Water Company at the Lula St. station, approx. 20% of total BRWC production
- ❑ Planning for test and observation wells for eventual development of a “ scavenger well” in the 2000-foot sand
- ❑ Sent letter July 1 to gauge opinions of District “ users” on funding options for this work; action expected at Sept. mtg.

Contact Information

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