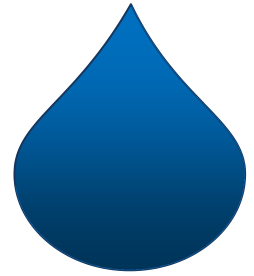


Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District



Watching out for A Treasured Earth Resource

*Dedicated to the conservation, orderly development and protection
of quality of ground water in the Capital Area*

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NEWSLETTER

June, 2015

Commission Considers Funding Options

The Capital Area Groundwater Conservation's Ad-Hoc Group has been meeting to discuss the best strategy for addressing the problem of saltwater intrusion in the 2,000-foot sand. It has been decided that the installation of a saltwater scavenger well system similar to the one Baton Rouge Water Company installed south of the Lula Street pumping station is the best strategy to pursue. In addition to working with USGS, the Commission is working with Dr. Frank Tsai of LSU to determine the optimum location for the installation of such a well, which will cost several million dollars to install and maintain. However, before the scavenger well installation takes place, one or more exploratory wells must be drilled to better define the thickness of the sand.

Cost estimates for the exploratory wells are in the \$250,000 range. Installation of the scavenger well system will more than likely require a grant from EPA. The exploratory wells, however, can be funded by an increase in collections by the District. There are several options here:

Across the board fee increase

The current fee for regulated wells in the Capital Area is \$5/million gallons of water produced. For 2014 our collections were just under \$294,000. Obviously, an increase in the pumpage fee would be required to allow for drilling of exploratory wells. Based on 2014 pumpage data from all users, an increase of ~\$4.25/million gallon of water produced.

Targeting Specific Users

The second option is to identify certain affected users in the 2,000-foot sand and charge them proportionately for the cost of the test wells.

Option 1 would require the Commission to pursue rulemaking through the Louisiana State Register using the Administrative Procedures Act. This was the procedure used when the fee was increased from \$4 to \$5 in 2013.

Option 2 would require a revision to the existing statute, which states that pumpage charges "... must be uniform as to all users...". An amendment to the statute was prepared for the just completed Legislature; however, a sponsor could not be found.

Legislature Attempts to Limit Commission Membership

House Bill 745 by Rep. Barrow would have prohibited anyone "... employed by, has an ownership interest in, or is a consultant of a private entity that produces ground water in the jurisdiction of the governing body for any beneficial use, in excess of fifty thousand gallons for any day during any calendar year from a well or wells owned or operated by such entity or from a well or wells owned or operated solely for the production of water used by such entity."

This would have seriously changed the representation on the Commission, prohibiting most members of the industrial community, as well as Baton Rouge Water Company, from being on the Board. Testimony for the Bill called it an attempt to keep "the fox from guarding the henhouse."

Testimony against the Bill centered on the intent of the Statute creating Capital Area Groundwater Conservation District and Commission to assure representation by all groundwater users in the district.

After listening to testimony from both sides, as well as information presented by District Director Anthony Duplechin, Rep. Barrow voluntarily deferred the Bill.

Prior to the end of the session, Representative Barrow introduced House Study Resolution 5, which requests the House Committee on Natural Resources and Environment to study the sustainability of the

Southern Hills Aquifer System supplying water to the Capital Area Region, and to report its findings to the House of Representatives prior to the convening of the 2016 Regular Session.

Researchers want to know how Louisiana is using its water resource and can it meet future demands

AMY WOLD
April 11, 2015

Unlike western states struggling with drought and water shortages, Louisiana's main fight with water has been focused on how to keep it from flooding places.

That picture is changing, though, and at the request of the Louisiana Water Resources Commission, the state is working toward the development of a statewide comprehensive water plan.

Almost two years ago, the Louisiana Water Resources Commission requested funding to come up with such a plan.

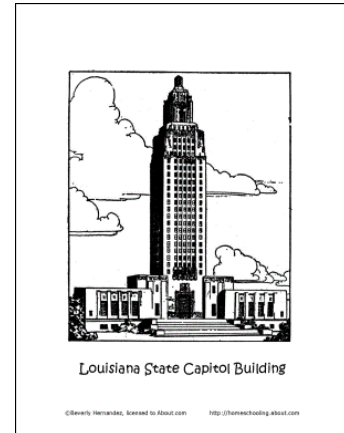
Because of state budgets problems, a large-scale effort was pared down to simply determine what a water plan should look like for the state, said Matthew Reonas, with the Office of Conservation.

That smaller effort, funded through the state Department of Natural Resources Office of Conservation and the state Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority, is now underway through The Water Institute of the Gulf, Reonas said.

The key issues to be included in this framework report will be establishing where the state stands with its water resources, determining how the water is being

used and figuring out what impact increased water usage could have on the resource, he said.

"This is a smaller scale project. It's not a comprehensive plan or a statewide plan," Reonas told the



audience in a recent plan update meeting.

The project started in January and should be wrapped up by the spring of 2016, said Scott Hemmerling, associate director of human dimensions with The Water Institute of the Gulf.

"We need to establish supply and demand into the future," he said.

Researchers are gathering water data and have collected information from other states' water resource plans to get a better idea of what Louisiana's plan could look like.

Once that work is done, the information will be used to focus on a few areas of the state that are determined to be of concern and to see if the plan works.

Although the research into water management plans has revealed some common themes, Louisiana has additional challenges, such as a large delta system on the Mississippi and Atchafalaya rivers and coastal restoration projects that

will use large amounts of water resources.

The next progress update will be presented during the summer Louisiana Water Resources Commission meeting, Reonas said.

Out of the Past

The following article appeared in the October 27, 2000 edition of the Hammond News Star

If there was ever a time for the Florida Parishes legislators to work together as a regional delegation for a regional cause, that time is now. The cause is water, perhaps our most precious natural resource and one that is threatened by the prospect of overuse.

On Monday, the Tangipahoa Parish Council unanimously resolved to ask legislators to create a groundwater conservation district for the Florida Parishes. Such a district would give the Florida Parishes a voice in issues affecting drinking water supplies, and it would give the region some authority to deal with those issues.

The resolution springs from concern and lawsuits over a merchant power plant which is to be built near Bogalusa and could use up to 7 million gallons of water a day. But other indicators have

also raised alarm -the release of 10-year-old data showing salt water intrusion in two of the aquifers that provide our drinking water, public wells that recently have had to be dug deeper and reports of private wells that have dried up.

The Florida Parishes share a system of interconnected aquifers that have provided us with an abundance of good drinking water. Our water is the envy of neighboring parishes and even other states.

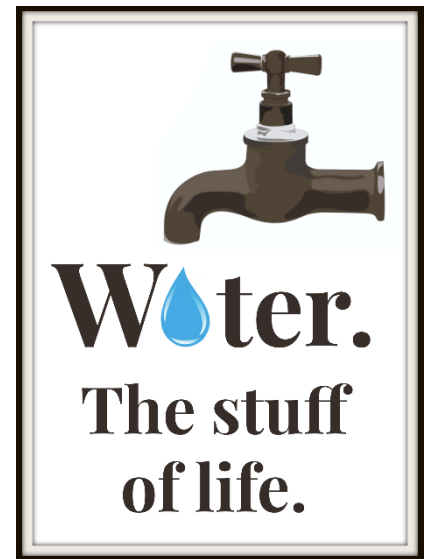
Until just recently, it would have seemed ludicrous to even suggest that Louisiana, the swampy state at the end of the Mississippi River, would have any concerns about a lack of water. However, other parts of the state are experiencing threats to their water supplies. And now we come to realize that since the state has no regulations for permitting groundwater use, for all we know other areas may have already tapped into the Florida Parishes aquifers.

The scientific information on the status of the aquifer's water supply needs to be updated, especially in light of the regional population swell in the past decade and the severe drought the region has been experiencing in recent years.

Regulations permitting groundwater use need to be carefully researched, formulated and put into effect by a governing body representing the region.

Creating a regional water conservation district is a logical first step toward protecting our drinking water supply.

We commend the members of the Parish Council for recognizing the



situation and taking action. We ask our readers to join in urging local lawmakers to begin protecting the regional water supply by creating a Florida Parishes Water Conservation District in the next legislative session.

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