



# Ground Water Resources Commission Meeting

January 19-20, 2012



# Mr. John Adams

## DNR Office of Conservation

# Adoption of Meeting Summary

December 7, 2011





**Secretary Scott Angelle**

**HCR 1 Status Update**



**Secretary Scott Angelle**

**Ground Water Management Plan  
Development Overview**



# Key Ground Water Management Plan Components

- Monitoring
- Education
- Registration
- Evaluation
- Incentives
- Auditing
- Enforcement
- Emergencies
- Collaboration



# Monitoring

- Should the state invest in a robust network of observation wells?
- Are there any opportunities to leverage with other state agencies such as DEQ, Coastal, LSU Shreveport, locals?
- Should the state investigate opportunities to leverage where surface and ground water resources exist then reassess monitoring needs?
- Should USGS be the primary resource for monitoring?
- If resources are limited, would monitoring programs be limited to areas of groundwater aquifers with existing aquifer sustainability challenges due to water level decline, salt water encroachment or subsidence?

# Monitoring (cont.)

- What are the pros and cons of implementing a technology-based approach vs. labor intensive approach to the collection and reporting of water level and water quality data?
- Who all would benefit from expansion of the existing observation well network?
- Could DEQ enhance their monitoring program with expansion of the observation well network?
- Should expansion of the observation well network be to the extent that data derived from the network could be as a vital statistic to issue a grade or sustainability rating to each aquifer system from a multi-departmental perspective?
- Should we require public supply, irrigation, industrial and other non-domestic well owners with wells above a certain size or withdrawal capacity to report production to the state?

# Monitoring (cont.)

- Should groundwater withdrawal volumes be determined by metering or other means of quantifying groundwater production?
- Should groundwater production reporting be limited to certain areas within aquifers and/or certain aquifers, or should groundwater production reporting be applied statewide?
- Should the state rank (prioritize) aquifers on their sustainability so we can apply resources to the most troubled?
- Should Louisiana consider improving surface water quantity measurements in areas where surface water is likely to be a supplement or alternative resource to address ground water sustainability issues?



# Monitoring (cont.)

- If surface water supplies are being contemplated as a more frequent replacement of groundwater, should there be a larger emphasis on groundwater *quality* monitoring and reporting?
- Should the state further investigate the necessity, timing and resource commitment for developing, implementing and maintaining Groundwater Availability Modeling?
- Should capital outlay and fiscal policy be tied to compliance with production metering or quantification and reporting for public supply well owners or other well owners seeking state funds?
- Is there agreement that monitoring is the fundamental and key component to aquifer sustainability discussions and groundwater budget design, planning and management decisions?

# Education

- Should the state direct resources toward the establishment of groundwater education and water conservation curriculum in elementary or higher grade levels statewide?
- Should the state direct resources toward a more robust groundwater resource and conservation education program?
- Should the state seek to partner with any existing web-based education efforts or develop/ improve upon existing DNR web-based education and outreach efforts?
- Should statewide water districts be required to provide on a regular basis groundwater resource conservation education announcements to customers via billing invoices?

# Education (cont.)

- Are there education opportunities through the LSU Cooperative Extension Service?
- Could the state rely upon local governments through building permit offices to provide groundwater education and conservation practices, etc.?
- Are there any social media opportunities for groundwater education and conservation?
- Should the state seek resources to develop an internet based driller certification and annual continuing education program?

# Education (cont.)

- Should the state focus resources on developing a groundwater conservation education strategy and materials directed at various youth groups?
- Should the state establish a multi-agency “Environmental Awareness Week” to including groundwater resource sustainability and conservation issues in collaboration with other state agencies?
- Should Conservation seek to partner with each parish to establish a single point of contact person within each parish to serve as a champion of the parish’s groundwater education and conservation leader in coordination with state efforts for the same?

# Registration

- In an effort to achieve 100% compliance with water well registration (notification) and agency evaluation requirements for proposed well installation for non-exempt well use purposes such as irrigation, public supply, industrial, etc., should the state amend existing Louisiana Administrative Code regulation for water well drillers to ensure that water well pre-installation notification evaluation has been performed and an appropriate agency response issued to the well owner prior to engaging in well construction operations?
- Are there any other ways that the water well drilling community could be utilized to obtain 100% registration (pre-installation notification) compliance?
- Should the state focus resources to implement integration of water well driller registration and well owner notification database management systems into one consolidated system and improve SONRIS and GIS output capability?

# Registration (cont.)

- Should resources be directed toward developing online technology and applications to provide the water well driller community greater access to agency notification, evaluation and response correspondence, etc. applicable to the water well pre-installation notice and evaluation process?
- Should the state pursue amending statutory or regulatory requirements to mandate well owner registration of any water well still in existence (not plugged and abandoned or destroyed) that was previously grandfathered out of the necessity to be registered with the state under Louisiana Administrative Code Title 56?

# Evaluation

- Is the current law and regulation requiring submission of notices of intent to install a new water well to Conservation for non-exempt water wells to be used for irrigation, public supply, industrial and other purposes adequate or in need of improvement?
- Should Conservation continue implementation and improvement of their existing water well pre-installation “notice of intent” aquifer sustainability and existing water well impact evaluation procedure?
- Should water well pre-installation “notice of intent” law and regulations be revised to remove the exempt status of certain replacement well installations such as for replacement of long term inactive wells?
- Should the water well pre-installation notification requirements for installation of water wells to be used for non-exempt purposes (irrigation, public supply, industrial, etc.) include disclosure of the water well owner’s intent to use alternative water resources?

# Evaluation (cont.)

- Should the state consider revising the statutory/regulatory definition of “sustainability”? The current definition of sustainability under ground water management law is “the development and use of ground water in a manner that can be maintained for the present and future time without causing unacceptable environmental, economic, social, or health consequences.”
- Should resources be provided to improve and increase availability of the reservation well network and state agency ground water level and quality data through the DNR SONRIS GIS system?
- Should there be a request of the legislature to development a fund for the development of aquifer-wide groundwater availability models?



# Incentives

- Should the state consider developing one or more financial incentives such as:
  - Establish water use fees for a trust fund to subsidize surface water use
  - Create a cost share funding mechanism to facilitate development of water reuse
  - Create a credit system for surface water alternative users
  - Provide incentives or tax reductions to encourage water recycling / reuse, surface water irrigation / diversion projects and beneficial watershed forest / agricultural retention projects
- Should DNR develop a groundwater conservation stewardship recognition plan?
- Should legislation be considered to provide a means for water authority(s) to pursue Public Private Partnerships to fund water infrastructure projects?

# Auditing

- Should Conservation continue to implement its current statewide water well owner notification compliance audit process?
- Should the state direct resources towards consolidating existing and future water well registration and notification database information under one uniform database system and establish one unique well identifier for each well in the system?
- Should large volume industrial, irrigation and public supply wells located in certain aquifers be required measure groundwater withdrawal and report withdrawal production volumes to the state on a periodic basis?
- Should state agencies consider developing a multi-agency aquifer status report on an annual basis?

# Enforcement

- Should Conservation continue to issue Compliance Orders and Notices of Violation to water well owners based on findings of its ongoing water well notification compliance audit process focused owners of wells used for non-exempt purposes such as irrigation, public supply, industrial and other uses?
- Should Conservation take a more aggressive approach within existing statutory law to maximize assessment of civil penalties?
- Should civil penalties collected from ground water management regulation be earmarked toward other groundwater program activities, e.g. education and outreach, incentives, auditing, etc.?
- Should Conservation consider means other than issuance of enforcement notices with or without assessment of civil penalties to enforce compliance with groundwater management regulations?

# Emergencies

- Should there be an ad-hoc standing committee be created to address groundwater emergencies?
- Should there be a different mechanism to address acute groundwater issues?
- Does the state already have means of addressing groundwater emergencies through GOHSEP?

# Collaboration

- Should additional efforts be initiated to locate and implement reservoirs in strategic locations?
- Should the state consider aquifer based regions similar to Sparta and Capital area?
- Does the current reservoir siting and prioritization protocol take into consideration location of reservoirs in areas of the state where alternatives to groundwater resources are in greater need?
- Should new legislation extend and build upon act 955 and recognize the interconnectivity of ground and surface water resources?
- Should the state consider funding university research to address groundwater resource sustainability?

# Public Comments

