

Office of Conservation Response to “Comments on Proposed Items for Office of Conservation Report Checklist,” included in CAGWCC Chairman Barry Huggins to Commissioner of Conservation Richard leyoub correspondence, Sept. 16, 2017.

For each report, please verify the following are provided:

- _____ **A.** **A list showing members and officers of the board of commissioners (“Board”) of the Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District (“CAGWCD”), including the bodies that such members represent and any changes in Board membership over the preceding six (6) months.** *The Chairman comments that this information is “superfluous” and “public information, clearly given on CAGWCD’s website.” Further, he comments that “Conservation has a seat on CAGWCD’s Board. If this member is doing his job, any changes in the Board’s composition will be reported in real time. I urge you not to clutter the report with unnecessary information that’s already public and easily obtained.”* **OC response:** The agency appreciates that the information is available on the CAGWCC website, although it also must note that the lack of up-to-date information regarding membership was raised as an issue by its representative on the CAGWCD board in June 2017. This deficiency appears to have been corrected at the present time. More to the point, though, this report is intended to provide a concise overview of the groundwater resources of the CAGWCD and the actions and activities of the board overseeing the CAGWCD, not simply for the edification of the Office of Conservation, which is well advised of such actions and activities by its representative, but more importantly for the Louisiana Legislature, the Water Resources Commission (WRC), and the Water Management Advisory Task Force (WMATF), who should be considered the primary audience. The agency anticipates that the elected and appointed members of these bodies will be expecting to receive nothing less than professional, comprehensive, and up-to-date reports for review without the necessity of having to visit the CAGWCC website or other external sources. This information may suitably be placed as an appendix in an effort to streamline the narrative body of the report.
- _____ **B.** **Copies of the agendas and minutes and/or summaries of all Board meetings and any public hearings conducted by the Board, including a list of submissions to the Board, for the preceding six (6) months.** *The Chairman comments that this information is also “superfluous,” as “CAGWCD’s agendas and minutes are published on its web site.”* **OC response:** As with the OC response to comments on Item A, again, the agency appreciates that some of the information is available on the CAGWCC website (although not a list of submissions to the Board), but will once more note that it is our anticipation that the elected and appointed members of the Legislature, the WRC, and the WMATF will be expecting to receive nothing less than professional, comprehensive, and up-to-date reports for review without the necessity of having to visit the CAGWCC website or other external sources. This information may suitably be placed as an appendix; unapproved minutes or meeting summaries may be listed as “provisional” or simply as “unapproved,” however the case may be at the time of publication.
- _____ **C.** **A brief summary of the (1) scope, (2) term, and (3) cost of any cooperative agreements and/or contracts entered into by the Board over the preceding six (6) months, such agreements and/or contracts being relative to the study and/or survey of the groundwater resources in the CAGWCD, including:** *No comment from Chairman.*

- _____ 1) Recommendations for conservation of groundwater resources within the CAGWCD;
 - _____ 2) Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging groundwater level drawdowns within the CAGWCD;
 - _____ 3) Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging land surface subsidence within the CAGWCD; and
 - _____ 4) Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging groundwater quality degradation, including saltwater encroachment, within the CAGWCD.
- _____ D. A narrative description and status update of actual and projected saltwater intrusion/encroachment within the groundwater systems of the CAGWCD. *No comment from Chairman.*
- _____ E. A narrative description and status update of any actual and projected land surface subsidence within the CAGWCD. *No comment from Chairman.*
- _____ F. Copies of updated CAGWCD management plans and/or other strategy documents adopted by the Board relative to the study, mitigation, and/or general management of groundwater resources, saltwater intrusion, and land subsidence within the CAGWCD. *After the first report submission, such documents may be submitted once annually at the discretion of the Board. No comment from Chairman. OC note: These plans or documents may be included in an appendix at the Board's discretion.*
- _____ G. A narrative summary and scientific analysis (if available) detailing the operational status and effectiveness of any structures installed within the groundwater systems of the CAGWCD to mitigate and/or otherwise manage actual and projected saltwater intrusion/encroachment. *No comment from Chairman.*
- _____ H. A brief summary of the (1) scope, (2) term, and (3) cost of scientific investigations funded in whole or in part by the Board over the preceding six (6) months, such investigations being relative to the study and/or survey of the groundwater resources in the CAGWCD, including: *The Chairman comments that this item is "redundant; the required information has already been transmitted in the answers to Item C. The only type of 'cooperative agreement' into which the Board would enter 'relative to the study and/or survey of groundwater resources' would, by definition be a 'scientific investigation.' Perhaps Item C should be reworded to make it all-encompassing, but including Item H as a separate requirement in the report checklist is redundant and unnecessary." OC response: The agency agrees with this comment and will revise Item C accordingly to make it all-encompassing, as suggested by the Chairman, while deleting Item H.*
- _____ 1) Recommendations for conservation of groundwater resources within the CAGWCD;
 - _____ 2) Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging groundwater level drawdowns within the CAGWCD;
 - _____ 3) Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging land surface subsidence within the CAGWCD; and

- _____ 4) **Prevention and/or alleviation of damaging/potentially damaging groundwater quality degradation, including saltwater encroachment, within the CAGWCD.**
- _____ I. **A brief summary of the findings of any scientific investigations relative to the study and/or survey of groundwater resources and land subsidence in the CAGWCD released over the preceding six (6) months, such investigations having been funded in whole or in part by the Board.** *Copies of abstracts and links to full reports on-line are acceptable substitutions. The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant; the required information has already been transmitted in the answer to Item D.”* **OC response:** The agency disagrees with this comment. Item D requests a status update on saltwater encroachment; this item requests a summary of findings of scientific investigations that would certainly include studies of saltwater encroachment but may also profitably inform on issues of groundwater volumes, recharge rates, aquifer interconnectivity, and land subsidence, among other items, such investigations having been provided at least some funding by the CAGWCC. If no investigations meeting these criteria exist, simply state this fact, or if such investigations or studies are summarized in Item D, simply refer back to that item as appropriate.
- _____ J. **A description of existing groundwater production limits within the CAGWCD as authorized by the Board, identifying (1) the date such limits were adopted, (2) the reason(s) for adoption of such limits, (3) the production limits by aquifer, and (4) the production limits by regulated user.** *Here and hereinafter, “user” as defined by R.S. 38:3073. The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant; the required information has already been transmitted in the answer to Item F. In addition, the word ‘aquifer’ is a mis-nomer. The production limits adopted by the Board, and stated in the CAGWCD’s Management Plan are by strata, as in the ‘1500 foot sand’ or the 2800 foot sand.’ All of these strata are included in the same aquifer system, which is the Southern Hills Aquifer.”* **OC response:** The agency understands the comment but believes a clear, succinct listing of the information in the body of the report would be more instructive to the intended audience separate and apart from the information provided in a lengthier management plan or document, which, as noted earlier, may be included in an appendix at the Board’s discretion. On terminology, the agency does not object to the use of “sand” as a local, commonplace, and traditional substitution for “aquifer.” Indeed, like the U.S. Geological Survey in its numerous reports, the agency itself uses the terms interchangeably; see specifically the USGS Scientific Investigations Report 2013-5227, Version 1.2, June 2014, p. 1. Generally, “sands” are distinguished individually (i.e., “1,500-foot sand”) in scientific reports but labeled for general purposes as part of the Southern Hills Aquifer System, although the USGS further divides this system into three main groupings, the Jasper, Evangeline, and Chicot Equivalent Aquifer Systems (see USGS Fact Sheet 2017-3010, “Water Resources of the Southern Hills Regional Aquifer System, Southeastern Louisiana,” March 2017).
- _____ K. **A list of existing regulated users within the CAGWCD.** *The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant,” the information being “in the public domain by multiple means, including the CAGWCD web site and the SONRIS website operated by Louisiana DNR.”* **OC response:** The agency appreciates that some of the information is available in the public domain but again notes that it is our anticipation that the elected and appointed members of the Legislature, the WRC, and the WMATF will be expecting to receive nothing less than professional, comprehensive, and up-to-date reports for review without the necessity of

having to visit the CAGWCC website or other external sources. This information may suitably be placed as an appendix.

- _____ **L.** **The total regulated groundwater pumping volume for each regulated user within the CAGWCD over the preceding six (6) months.** *This list should show for each regulated user: (1) the total regulated groundwater pumping volume; (2) the classification by use (according to CAGWCD statutes and rules) of this pumping volume; (3) the parish location of this regulated groundwater production; and (4) the source, by aquifer(s), of this regulated groundwater production. The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant,” the information being “published on the CAGWCD’s web site.”* **OC response:** As with the response to the comments on Item K above, the agency will simply note that this information may suitably be placed as an appendix.
- _____ **M.** **The current charge or fee assessed on regulated groundwater use within the CAGWCD.** *The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant,” the information being “contained in the CAGWCD’s Management Plan.”* **OC response:** The agency notes this as important information that would most suitably be included in the narrative body of the report, perhaps in an introduction or in introductory paragraphs on the actions and activities of the CAGWCD Board.
- _____ **N.** **The total groundwater use assessment (fee) imposed on each regulated user over the preceding six (6) months.** *The Chairman comments that this item is “redundant,” the information on each regulated user’s pumping volume being “shown on the CAGWCD website” with each user being “charged the exact same fee,” thereby making calculation of assessment fee totals “a trivial exercise in basic mathematics, and not something on which report space should be wasted.”* **OC response:** The agency will simply note that this information may suitably be placed as an appendix, perhaps even combined at the Board’s discretion with other reporting items such as Item K and Item L into a plain, readable, and user friendly table, graph, or chart.
- _____ **O.** **A list identifying new wells registered within the CAGWCD according to its statutes and rules over the preceding six (6) months, showing for each new well: (1) its owner; (2) its classification by use; (3) its location by parish; (4) its location by aquifer; and (5) its actual and/or projected annual groundwater pumping volume.** *The Chairman’s comment was that the word “permitted” be substituted for the word “registered.”* **OC response:** The agency will include the phrase “permitted and/or installed” for the word “registered.” This information may suitably be placed as an appendix.
- _____ **P.** **A list identifying registered wells plugged and abandoned (P&A) according to CAGWCD statutes and rules over the preceding six (6) months, showing for each P&A well: (1) its owner; (2) its classification by use; (3) its location by parish; (4) its location by aquifer; and (5) its actual annual groundwater pumping volume.** *The Chairman’s comment was that the word “permitted” be substituted for the word “registered.”* **OC response:** The agency will include the phrase “permitted” for “registered.” This information may suitably be placed as an appendix.
- _____ **Q.** **A summary of any out-of-state groundwater sales from the CAGWCD over the preceding six (6) months, showing: (1) vendor; (2) volumes of groundwater produced and sold; (3)**

parishes of production; (4) out-of-state entity or entities to which groundwater was sold; and (3) the price paid for this groundwater. *The Office of Conservation interprets the intent to be limited to out-of-state groundwater sales for the primary purpose of being a source of water for beneficial use (bulk water) and not to include groundwater utilized within the CAGWCD or the State of Louisiana in the production of manufactured goods for commercial and/or industrial use or sale, such as beverages, solvents, gasoline, or other processed items. No comment from Chairman.*

____ R. **A summary of volumes of groundwater pumped from within the CAGWCD during the preceding six (6) months and transported out-of-district as part of a public supply or industrial distribution system. For each regulated user thus engaged, indicate: (1) total volume of groundwater produced for out-of-district distribution; (2) parish of production; and (3) end distribution point, by parish.** *No comment from Chairman.*

____ S. **A summary of volumes of groundwater used for (1) residential, (2) commercial or industrial, and (3) agricultural purposes within the CAGWCD during the preceding six (6) months. The amounts used for industrial and agricultural purposes may be estimated. For residential volumes, the Office of Conservation will accept numbers generated utilizing standard U.S. Geological Survey formulas for individual consumption.** *No comment from Chairman.*