



THE WATER INSTITUTE
OF THE GULF™

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For Immediate Release

Institute begins work on supporting long-term sustainability of the capital area's groundwater resources

BATON ROUGE, La. (May 22, 2019) – The Water Institute of the Gulf has launched the first phase of a project to support long-term planning for Capital Area Ground Water Conservation Commission.

“Although a significant amount of science has been done in addressing the saltwater intrusion into the Southern Hills Aquifer under Baton Rouge, there are multiple factors that go into making decisions on how the challenge could be addressed,” said Alyssa Dausman, Ph.D., the Institute’s vice president for science. “Facilitating a structured decision-making process to support long-term water resource planning brings together not only the science that’s been done, but also incorporates the values and needs of the community and industrial users of this resource.”

The work getting underway now is the first step in a three-phase process that includes an evaluation of the state of the science, identifying data and science gaps, and facilitating and structuring the decision-making process for the commission members. This process will be used to aid the commission members in developing a suite of possible alternatives the commission could employ over the long-term resulting in a sustainable aquifer and water resources. Work in the next two phases depends on the completion and results of phase one, which should be completed by the end of the year.

The Capital Area Ground Water Conservation District was created by the Louisiana Legislature in 1974 due to concerns in the region including water level declines of as much as 400 feet, saltwater encroachment in the downtown Baton Rouge area of the Southern Hills Aquifer, and land subsidence caused by over pumping groundwater. The district’s governing commission began work in January 1975 with the tasks to develop, promote and implement management strategies to provide for the conservation and protection of local groundwater resources in the district.

“We’re currently working to pull together the science that’s already been done and working with partners as we start developing a way for the commission to evaluate multiple factors to produce the best path forward,” Dausman said.

The Institute’s work will build upon the Louisiana Water Resources Assessment for Sustainability and Energy Management, previously conducted by the Institute for the Louisiana Department of Natural Resources-Office of Conservation and the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority.

About The Water Institute of the Gulf

The Institute is a not-for-profit, independent applied research and technical services institution with a mission to help coastal and deltaic communities thoughtfully prepare for an uncertain future. Through an integrated and interdisciplinary approach, our work helps create more resilient communities, thriving economies, and healthy environment. For more information, visit www.thewaterinstitute.org.

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