

About the Sparta Commission

In 1999, the Louisiana legislature established the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District and its board of commissioners, 'Sparta Commission.'

According to the creating statutes, the Sparta Commission's purpose is to study ways to put Sparta water "to the highest beneficial use" in terms of public welfare. The statutes note that "the continued uncontrolled use of groundwater from Sparta and other aquifers may create critical problems;" and they charge the Sparta Commission with studying "how to provide for the efficient administration, conservation, and orderly development of groundwater resources" in the Sparta area.

The Sparta Commission consists of nineteen voting members:

- 1) one member from each from the nine major Sparta using parishes: Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Morehouse, Ouachita, Union, Webster, and Winn.
- 2) one member rotating among seven lesser using parishes: Bossier, Caddo, Caldwell, LaSalle, Natchitoches, Richland, and Sabine.
- 3) one member each from the wood product industry, agriculture, and other industrial users.
- 4) one member from each of the six municipalities within the district that have a minimum use of five hundred thousand gallons of Sparta water per day.

Except for the term of the rotating member, which is one year, terms, which were initially staggered, are three years and renewable. The appropriate group nominates, and the Governor appoints.

Louisiana legislation of 2006 requires the Sparta Commission meetings to be held on a rotating basis in Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Ouachita, Union, Webster, and Winn parishes.

Description by Alice Stewart, member of Sparta Commission, March 9, 2007