

LOUISIANA
SPARTA
Ground Water Commission

Newsletter

OUR MISSION = CONSERVE. PROTECT. RESTORE. MAINTAIN

May 2014

Legislation moves forward on Union-Lincoln Initiative

Senate approves land purchase 35-0, bill moves to House

By Rick Hohlt
Sparta Ground Water Commission

The Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative is one step closer to having a site for a water treatment plant that's part of the group's overall goal of reducing the draw down on the Sparta Aquifer.

This month, Legislation allowing the Union-Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative to buy land in the Old D'Arbonne State Park as the site of a water treatment plant was approved by the Louisiana Senate.

Senators voted 35-0 to send the bill to the House for action. The bill, SB 430 by Sen. Mike Walsworth, R-West Monroe, allows the state to sell 21.5 acres of the old park property to the ULRWSI at the \$65,000 appraised price.

The bill now heads to the House. But regardless of whether the House vote comes within the next few days or the next few weeks, we urge legislators to follow the Senate's lead and approve Walsworth's bill.



The ULRWSI had hoped that it could somehow convince the state to give it the land, or perhaps consider a long-term, low-cost lease. But apparently neither are in the works. In fact, it's illegal for the state to outright give away property without receiving something of like value in return.

So, although terms of Walsworth's bill mean the ULRWSI will have to pay \$65,000 for the site, at least the water group will be able to get the property. This removes the acreage from a much larger tract in the former park that the state plans to put

Continued on Page 2

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• Several Commissioners awaiting
Governor's appointment.

Devon Energy is Title Sponsor of Sparta Shoot

Devon Energy is once again the title sponsor of the Sparta Foundation's Sporting Clays Competition. The competition will be held Saturday, June 7th at the West Monroe Sheriff's Rifle Range. All proceeds from this event will fund the WaterFest activities for children in north Louisiana. Aquifer education is the number one priority for the Sparta Ground Water Commission. More information is available at spartaaquifer.com.

Lindsay Gouedy (center), Sparta Commission educator, accepts a check for \$2,500 from Michelle Gantt and Amie Skipper of Devon Energy for the title sponsorship of the 2014 Sparta Sporting Clays Competition.



Lake D'Arbonne a reliable water supply to Ruston & Farmerville

From Page 1

out for bids, thereby evidently easing the ULRWSI's fear that it could lose out.

Yet, even if the House OKs the Walsworth bill, the measure still has to win approval of Gov. Bobby Jindal. Provisions of the bill become effective upon the governor's signature.

The ULRWSI's mission is to eventually build a pipeline from Farmerville to Ruston, and use treated water from Lake D'Arbonne as an alternative to the Sparta. The initiative will supply potable water to Farmerville and Ruston. It's a massive, costly project that will take years to complete, but it's a project that stands to benefit not only the potential water users of this project, but everyone in north Louisiana

that uses the Sparta. Hundreds of thousands of residents across northern Louisiana depend on the stressed aquifer for their water supply. Currently Lake D'Arbonne is not used as a potable water supply.

Studies have shown that the water usage from the lake will have minimal impact on lake levels. Data from the last 10 years indicates water flows over the spillway on average nine months a year. Instead of losing this water it can be converted to potable water for consumption.

Getting the property upon which to eventually build the treatment plant is the next step in the process. Let's hope that lawmakers understand that what's good for northern Louisiana is also good for the entire state.

WaterFest activities on tap for 2014

It's that time of year again, time for the highlight of the year for the fifth graders of Webster Parish. It's WaterFest time! The Sparta Foundation is excited to have the opportunity to present the 2nd Annual Sparta WaterFest to the fifth grade students of Webster Parish!

Students from across the Sparta Aquifer's main recharge parishes will participate in a full day of learning and fun at Caney Lake located north of Minden, La. The Sparta Foundation has recruited experts from across the state of Louisiana to present topics about water. The state of Louisiana will be well represented by the following agencies; NRCS, Department of Agriculture and Forestry, Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality, LSU Agriculture Extension, and Capital Groundwater District.

Each student will have the opportunity to participate in six interactive lessons which

will include topics of Water History, Water Law, Water Biology, and Water Geology. All of these activities are correlated with current educational standards for the state of Louisiana.

The Sparta WaterFest is an educational event that has grown to include four parishes in north Louisiana. Over the past four years we have coordinated and implemented eleven WaterFest events reaching approximately

6,000 students. The Sparta Foundation continues to push forward in our goal of conservation education for users of our most important natural resources in north Louisiana, the Sparta Aquifer.



Scenes from last year's WaterFest activities.

Reducing the use of Sparta water in your garden

By Anne Marie Anderson
Sparta Commission

The time is here to start preparations for summer gardens. This season, I am asking you to reconsider the way you water your garden. With the use of rain barrels and soaker hoses, you can greatly reduce the amount of water you use from the Sparta Aquifer.

During the growing season vegetable gardens usually need one inch of water (630 gallons per 1000 sq. ft.) per week. By simply using a soaker hose, you can cut that usage in half. The soaker hose will apply water directly to the soil so the loss of water through evaporation is reduced significantly. There are different types of soaker hoses available, but if you are considering using a rain barrel then you will need a rain barrel soaker hose. Regular soaker hoses require 20-25 pounds of pressure to operate. A rain barrel soaker hose will work with a rain barrel sitting flat on the ground. Although, it is best to slightly elevate the barrel so that gravity can do all the work. The set-up is pretty easy.



Rain barrels range in size from 40 gallons to 500 gallons and with a price range of \$40-\$400. A simple Google search for rain barrels yields plenty to choose from. If you are a do it yourselfer, then you could engineer one yourself by using materi-

als you most likely already have. The possibilities are endless when it comes to designing your rain watering system. If you position



your system to collect rain water from your roof then you can easily water your landscape around your home. These barrels are easy to camouflage into your existing landscape.

When setting up rain barrels for use in your vegetable gardens there are a few things to consider. If you will be using water from roof run-off then you should not use that water close to harvest time. Bacteria and other organisms are collected with the water. For leafy vegetables do not spray the vegetables directly, it is best to use a soaker hose. Another thing to consider and look into is the type of roof that you have. Wood shingles that have been treated should not be used because they could possibly kill your plants either in the vegetable garden or in your surrounding landscape. So, if you are considering this type of watering source please do a little research to see if this will work for you. I do hope you will consider it and help in replenishing our drinking water from the Sparta Aquifer.

RESOLUTION SUPPORTING THE UNION/LINCOLN INITIATIVE'S PENDING PROPERTY PURCHASE FROM THE STATE OF LOUISIANA

WHEREAS, the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District (SGCD) sponsored a study in 2002, to determine the amount of pumpage reduction in the 16-parish area needed to allow the Sparta Aquifer to maintain a sustainable level; and,

WHEREAS, the report recommended a reduction of 18mgd stabilize the level in the aquifer and 30mgd to allow for recovery and accommodate future growth in the 16-parish area; and,

WHEREAS, one of the recommendations was a project to withdraw 6.5mgd from Lake D'Arbonne Lake to replace Sparta Aquifer Usage in Union and Lincoln Parishes; and,

WHEREAS, the Louisiana Office of Conservation issued an Order designating three areas of the Sparta Aquifer as "areas of ground water concern". One of the three designated areas is the Ruston Area of Groundwater Concern, which consists of 108 square miles in Lincoln Parish; and,

WHEREAS, the Union Lincoln Regional Water Supply Initiative (ULRWSI) was created in 2003, for the purpose of development and utilization of any and all alternate water sources within Union and Lincoln Parishes, to reduce the consumption of water from the Sparta Aquifer and for the supplying of water for consumption within Union and Lincoln Parishes from such alternate water sources; and,

WHEREAS, ULRWSI todate has determined through engineering studies, which were funded by Federal funds, that Lake D'Arbonne water can be treated and the lake will yield the required water without any significant influence on the level of the lake; and,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, the Sparta Groundwater Conservation District supports the 2014-2015 Capital Outlay request for \$4.35 million over three years to advances this project to construction which includes NEPA Activities, Design Survey, Design Engineering, Easement Document Preparation and Legal and Administrative Activities.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be forwarded to the members of the Legislature of the Great State of Louisiana.

This Resolution was adopted by the Sparta Ground Water Conservation District Commission on the 17th day of April, 2014, by unanimous vote in a duly noticed meeting at which a quorum was present,



2014 Sparta Shoot scheduled for Saturday, June 7

Sporting clays competition to take place at the Ouachita Parish Shooting Range

 **Devon Energy - Title Sponsor**

devon

All proceeds will fund Waterfest activities for 5th grade students in north Louisiana.


A CHARITY DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF THE SPARTA AQUIFER
• CONSERVATION • EDUCATION • PRESERVATION • RECOVERY



Pictures are from previous Sparta Shoots.



If you would like to become a sponsor of the Sparta Shoot, fill out the form below...

**Saturday, June 7, 2014
Ouachita Sheriff's Department Shooting Range
West Monroe, LA**

\$1000 Co-Sponsorship Agreement

This is a tax deductible contribution to the Sparta Foundation.
This sponsorship includes site signage during the event and newspaper advertising prior to the event.
Also included with this sponsorship is one 5-man team for competition.
These funds will be used to further educate water users in north Louisiana on the importance of water conservation of the Sparta aquifer.

Thank you for your support of the Sparta Foundation / Tax ID# 27-1963518
Sparta Foundation, P. O. Box 10198 T.S., Ruston, LA 71272

Business or Organization _____ Authorized by _____

Address _____ Email contact _____



\$250 Station Sponsorship Agreement

This is a tax deductible contribution to the Sparta Foundation.
This sponsorship includes site signage at a shooting station during the event.
These funds will be used to further educate water users in north Louisiana on the importance of water conservation of the Sparta aquifer.

Thank you for your support of the Sparta Foundation / Tax ID# 27-1963518
Sparta Foundation, P. O. Box 10198 T.S., Ruston, LA 71272

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