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WATER WITHDRAWALS AND TRENDS IN LOUISIANA

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), in cooperation with the Water Resources Section of the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development (DOTD), recently completed a study that summarizes trends in ground-water levels for selected aquifers and streamflow for selected streams in Louisiana. The report, "Water Withdrawals and Trends in Ground-Water Levels and Stream Discharge in Louisiana," focuses chiefly on the Sparta aquifer in the northern part of the state, the Chicot aquifer system in the southwestern part, and the Southern Hills aquifer system in southeastern Louisiana. The report indicates about 1,600 Mgal/d (million gallons per day) of ground water was withdrawn from Louisiana's aquifers in the year 2000, and four aquifers or aquifer systems supplied about 93 percent of this water. The rate and extent of water level-decline (1990-2000) in the Sparta aquifer and Chicot and Southern Hills aquifer systems are described in the report. A brief history of the development of the aquifers for water use (since about 1900) also is included.

Surface water supplied about 84 percent of all water used in Louisiana in 2000. In the year 2000, about 8,700 Mgal/d of water were withdrawn from rivers, streams, lakes, and other surface-water sources in Louisiana. The Mississippi River supplied about 79 percent of the surface water used. The report contains additional information which includes brief summaries of surface-water use in 2000 and trends (1990-2000) for selected continuous-discharge (streamflow) stations that are maintained by the USGS.

The report contains easily understood information about Louisiana's aquifers and streams and will be useful to the general public in obtaining an overview of the state's water resources and the effect of withdrawals on these resources.

Copies of Water Resources Technical Report no. 68, "Water Withdrawals and Trends in Ground-Water Levels and Stream Discharge in Louisiana," by Dan J. Tomaszewski, John K. Lovelace, and Paul A. Ensminger, are available from the U.S. Geological Survey, 3535 S. Sherwood Forest Blvd., Suite 120, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70816, or the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, Water Resources Section, P.O. Box 94245, Baton Rouge, LA 70804.

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