



# The Facts About Critical Groundwater Designation



## **What is the problem with Arkansas's Groundwater?**

Arkansas has an abundance of good quality groundwater. However, some parts of the state are not so fortunate. The groundwater supply is being depleted faster than the rate of recharge. If this trend continues, it will result in permanent damage to the aquifers and a serious groundwater shortage. Measures must be taken to protect the state's precious groundwater supply. This can be done by reducing the use of groundwater through conservation and use of excess surface water.

## **What is a critical ground water area?**

Pursuant to Act 154 of 1991, the **Arkansas Natural Resources Commission** designates a critical groundwater area after notice and public hearing. The critical area is defined based on significant groundwater declines and/or water quality degradation. Boundaries are configured based on the natural hydrogeologic boundary of the aquifer.

## **What does it mean to be in a designated critical groundwater area?**

Designation recognizes the existence of a water quality or quantity problem and encourages local interests to develop a plan of action to address the problems.

## **What is in it for me?**

Designation makes an area a priority for state and federal programs such as tax credits and cost sharing programs.

## **Can being designated as a critical groundwater area negatively affect my community?**

**No.** This is a non-regulatory program, focusing on conservation and education programs, such as state tax incentives for the installation of water conservation practices.

## **Will regulation be imposed as a result of critical groundwater area designation?**

Regulation cannot be initiated without a new process involving lengthy legal proceedings, additional notice and public hearings. Regulation has not been proposed anywhere in the state.

## **Will water use fees result from designation?**

**No.** No additional fees of any kind are authorized by designation.

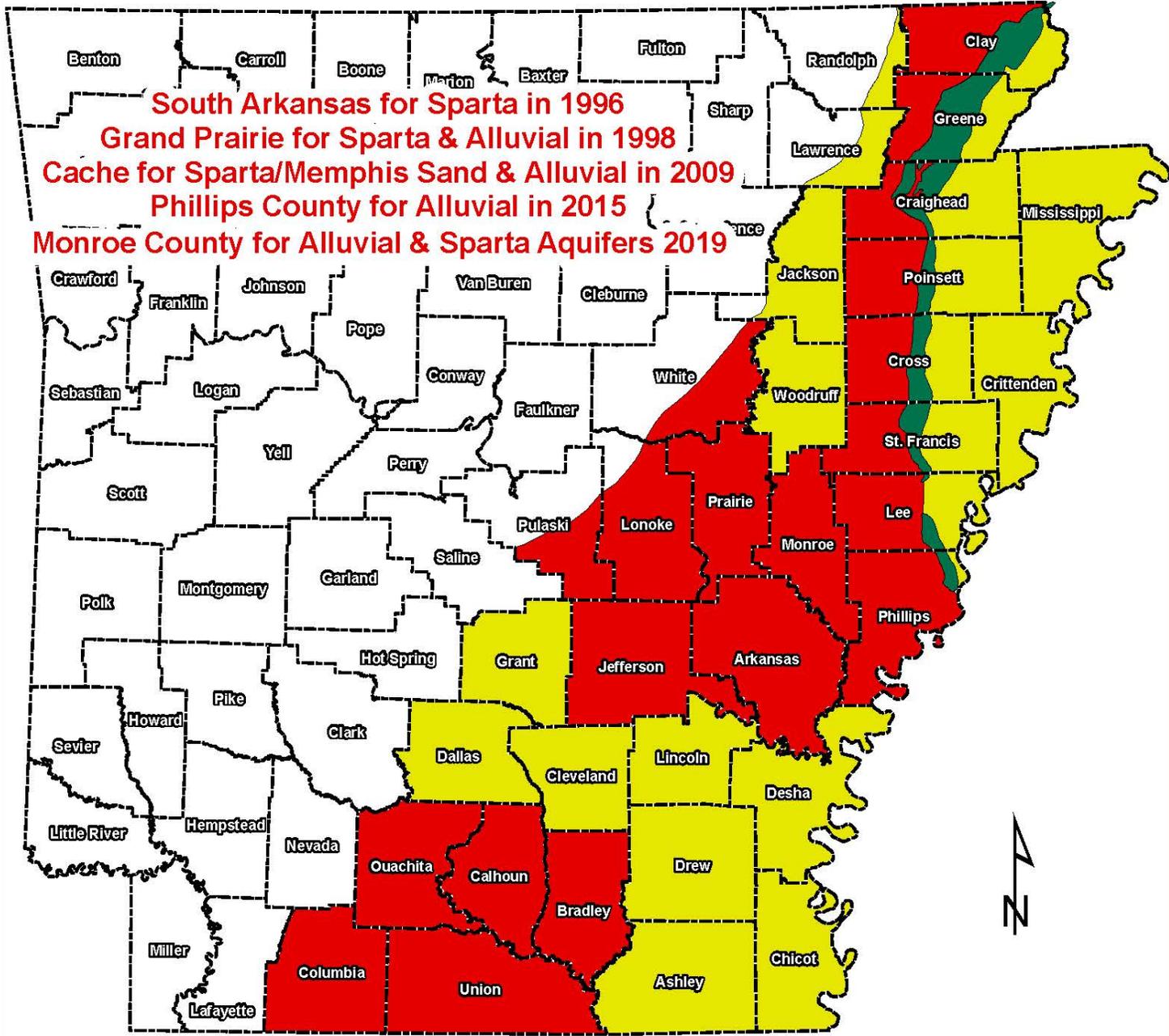
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# Critical Groundwater Areas

**South Arkansas for Sparta in 1996**  
**Grand Prairie for Sparta & Alluvial in 1998**  
**Cache for Sparta/Memphis Sand & Alluvial in 2009**  
**Phillips County for Alluvial in 2015**  
**Monroe County for Alluvial & Sparta Aquifers 2019**



## Legend

-  Current Critical Areas
-  Current Study Areas
-  Crowley's Ridge
-  County Boundaries

0 10 20 40 60 80 Miles

