

Prairielands eLine

Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District
www.prairielandsgcd.org

Natural Resources Committee Hearing Held

The House Natural Resources Committee, under the chairmanship of Representative Jim Keffer, met June 1, 2016, to discuss the regional and state water planning processes and the status of legislation from the 84th legislative session aimed at encouraging joint groundwater planning. Our local state representative, Dewayne Burns, was in attendance and reported to the committee the findings of his



Representative
DeWayne Burns

Subcommittee on Private Property Rights in Water, which met earlier this year.

During his presentation, Representative Burns emphasized the need to balance the protection of

private property rights in groundwater in rural Texas with the development of water supplies to meet continued population growth in the state. According to the TCEQ, the population of the state is expected to double by the year 2070. Representative Burns also noted the threat to private property rights in water by the federal government through the US Environmental Protection Agency's latest definition of "waters of the US" under the Clean Water Act.

Next, staff from the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) gave a review of their agency's programs and implementation of relevant legislation passed by the 84th Legislature, and recent updates to the surface Water Availability Models (WAMs). The committee discussed prioritization of senior water right holders and the administrative processing of surface water permit applications.



TWDB Chairman Bech Bruun

The remainder of the hearing focused on state and regional water planning as well as the joint planning process by groundwater conservation districts. Staff from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) provided a broad summary of planning responsibilities, ranging from local supply and demand issues to regional plans. TWDB Chairman Bech Bruun discussed the recently adopted 2017 State Water Plan, (see accompanying article "What is the State Water Plan?" for additional information) noting an increase in the number

Continued on page 2

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Inside this issue:

Natural Resources Committee Hearing (continued)	2
Upcoming Board meetings	2
State Water Plan	2
New Educational Trailer Exhibit	3
Aquifer Data/Monitor Well Program	3
District Activity Photos	

Special points of interest:

- House Natural Resources Committee studies groundwater.
- 2017 State Water Plan adopted.
- Public education trailer adds new rainwater harvesting exhibit.
- New monitor well added in Hill County.

Natural Resources Committee Hearing Held (cont. from page 1)

in the plan, for a total of approximately 550 strategies, at an estimated price tag of 63 billion dollars. Chairman Bruun pointed out that the 2017 plan is the state's most diverse and comprehensive plan to date.

Finally, Prairielands GCD's attorney, Brian Sledge, along with Dirk Aaron, the Clearwater Underground Water Conservation District General Manager, testified as to the role of groundwater management in the joint planning process. Sledge explained the process of developing



Attorney Brian Sledge gave testimony at the hearing.

“desired future conditions” (DFCs) for the aquifers located within Groundwater Management Areas (GMAs) by representatives of groundwater conservation districts and how the TWDB then runs

groundwater availability models to convert each DFC into a volume number – otherwise known as the “modeled available groundwater” (MAG). The MAG is required to be used for the groundwater availability number for a specified area in the regional water planning process.

The hearing closed after additional testimony was provided by TWDB staff and others on DFCs, the joint planning process, vote requirements, the adoption of DFCs by Groundwater Management Areas, and agency review.

Did You Know ...?

The Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District Board of Directors holds regular monthly board meetings which are open to the public.

Meetings are normally scheduled for the 3rd Monday of the month in the Board Room of the Liberty Hotel, 205 S. Caddo St., Cleburne, TX. (Board meetings that fall on a holiday are scheduled for an alternate date.)

The Board's Work Session typically begins at 8:30 a.m. with the actual Board Meeting following immediately after.

Both Board Meetings and Work Sessions

Upcoming Meeting Dates:
July 18—Liberty Hotel
August 15—Liberty Hotel
September 19—Liberty Hotel

are open to the public, however, certain restricted topics may be required to be discussed privately by directors during a closed-to-the-public Executive Session.

Meeting notices and agendas are publicly posted prior to the date of the meeting at the PGCD office and on the district's website at www.prairielandsgcd.org.

What is the State Water Plan?

The 2017 State Water Plan was adopted by the Texas Water Development Board on May 19, 2016.

To ensure the ongoing vitality of our economy, Texas' citizens, water experts, and government agencies collaborate in a comprehensive water planning process that culminates every 5 years in a written document called the State Water Plan.

The plan is developed so Texans will have enough water in the future

to sustain cities and rural communities, farms and ranches, and homes and businesses while also preserving the agricultural and natural resources that have defined Texas for generations.

The 2017 State Water Plan affirms that our population will continue its rapid growth and provides a roadmap for how to address the water needs that accompany that growth by identifying water management strategies and their associated

costs for communities all across the state. The information in this plan is critical to ensuring that Texas has adequate and affordable water supplies both now and in the future. Development of the state water plan is central to the mission of the Texas Water Development Board.

Based on 16 regional water plans, the state plan addresses the needs of all water user groups in the state –

Continued on page 3

New Exhibit Expands Scope of District Education Trailer

In May, the District contracted with Robert Reid Studios to develop and install an additional educational exhibit in the District's education trailer.

The new feature will help educate trailer visitors about the benefits and how-tos of rainwater harvesting.

Like the aquifer model, the exhibit "rains" during the demonstration filling a rain barrel affixed to the side of a model house. Attached to the rain barrel is a mock-up of a

pump and garden hose with a lawn sprinkler.

The education trailer, intended as an interactive museum-on-wheels, can be used on school campuses and during public festivals or similar events.

To schedule a trailer visit at your school or event, contact the Prairielands GCD office at (817) 556-2299 or Karen Siddall, public relations & education administrator via email at:

karensiddall@prairielandsgcd.org.



"Rain, Rain, Don't Go Away! Stay Around For a Drier Day!," the new rainwater harvesting exhibit has been installed in the public education trailer.

Aquifer Data/Monitor Well Program

Installation of water well monitor equipment in locations throughout the Prairielands district continues with the most recent addition of a new Hill County site (State Well Number 4015102).

The latest site will greatly increase the amount of information regarding the state of our groundwater and actual aquifer levels as this particular monitor well is physically located adjacent to the current City of Aquilla water supply well. It will be interesting to observe the impact on aquifer level drawdown with

the district equipment in such close proximity to a working water well.

The Aquilla site went live and online on June 15, 2016, and at that time, was measuring the water level of Hosston Formation of the Trinity aquifer at 617.98 feet below land surface at that specific point. Since that day, the moni-

Aquifer: Trinity
Formation: Hosston Formation
Type of Aquifer: Confined
Well Depth: 1,485 ft below land surface

tor equipment has transmitted daily high water level measurements to the Texas Water Development Board database.

These real-time results from this site and others are available online at the website — waterdatafortexas.org. Click on the tab at the top of the page labeled "Groundwater." Well sites are listed by county and the data currently available includes: aquifer information, monitoring entity, latest transmission date, and daily high water level (feet below land surface).

What is the State Water Plan? (cont. from page 2)

municipal, irrigation, manufacturing, livestock, mining, and steam-electric power should a repeat of the drought of record that the state suffered in the 1950s occurs.

The regional and state water plans consider a 50-year planning horizon: 2020 through 2070.

The TWDB has developed a web-

site (<http://www.twdb.texas.gov/waterplanning/swp/>) that lets water users statewide take an up-close look at data in the 2017 State Water Plan and how water needs change over time by showing the following:

- projected water demands,
- existing water supplies,
- the relative severity and projected water needs (potential short-

ages),

- the water management strategies recommended to address potential shortages, and
- recommended capital projects and their sponsors.



Prairielands GCD

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**Prairielands Groundwater
Conservation District**

Conserving, protecting, and enhancing
groundwater resources in Ellis, Hill,
Johnson, and Somervell counties

We're on the web at
prairielandsgcd.org.



In 2008 & 2009, the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality designated large areas over the Trinity Aquifer from the Red River to Central Texas as Priority Groundwater Management Areas (PGMA) due to critical groundwater declines facing the area.

The Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District was created in 2009 by the 81st Texas Legislature with a directive to conserve, protect and enhance the groundwater resources of Ellis, Johnson, Hill and Somervell Counties in Texas.

Photos from Around the District



Equipping a new monitor well in Aquilla



Texas SmartScape Plant Sale & Fairs



Burleson Rotary Club



Summer Reading Club Lake Whitney



Education Trailer Visits