

Prairielands eLine

The Newsletter of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District

Winter 2025 | Vol. 11, Iss. 4
November 21, 2025

Prairielands GCD Board of Directors Approves Increase to 2026 Water Use Fees



In a public meeting held on September 15, 2025, the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District (“District”) Board of Directors voted to approve an increase in water use fees for non-agricultural groundwater permits beginning in 2026. Currently, the District charges \$0.225 per thousand gallons of water for non-agricultural use. The fee adjustment raises the cost to \$0.240 per thousand gallons, a \$0.015 increase per thousand gallons.

The decision to increase water use fees follows a detailed review of projected revenues, inflationary trends, operating costs, and upcoming projects that support the District’s mission to manage and protect local groundwater resources. The Board of Directors emphasized that this adjustment is a necessary measure to ensure continued financial stability and to maintain the District’s capacity to respond to increasing water management demands.

Since 2009, the District has made very few adjustments to its

water use fees, opting instead to maintain steady rates while continuing to expand services and programs for the public. This rate increase reflects the Board’s commitment to long-term planning and proactive management as the region’s population grows and groundwater use continues to evolve.

For agricultural users, the production fee remains unchanged from \$1.00 per acre-foot annually, as defined in District Rule 2.1(a). Additionally, a 50% export surcharge will continue to apply to groundwater produced within the District and transported for use outside its boundaries, in accordance with District Rule 7.2.

The District values the participation of the community as we work together to protect and ensure the long-term sustainability of groundwater resources for future generations. If you have questions or need additional information, contact the District office at 817-556-2299.

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Board of Directors Appointments



Pictured from left to right: Gary Farmer – Ellis County, Brad Daniels – Hill County, Paul Tischler – Johnson County, and Marty McPherson – Somervell County.

At the September board meeting, four directors were formally sworn in to serve on the District's Board of Directors. Three were returning members reappointed by their respective County Commissioners' Courts, and one was newly appointed. These dedicated individuals will help guide the District's ongoing efforts to conserve and protect groundwater resources across Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell counties.

The District's Board of Directors consists of eight members, two from each county, who are appointed to serve unpaid four-year terms. The District is grateful for the continued service and leadership of its board members and extends appreciation to all involved in the appointment process.

The District is pleased to welcome our newest board member Gary Farmer, who was appointed to serve by the Ellis County Commissioners Court on September 2, 2025. Director Farmer was officially sworn into office on September 15, 2025, during the District's regular board meeting. A fourth-generation farmer and rancher, Director Farmer spent 36 years with Leggett & Platt as a Safety Manager and has served for more than 25 years on the Rural Bardwell Water Supply Corporation Board of Directors, where he is currently president. His extensive knowledge and long-standing commitment to water stewardship brings valuable insight to the District's mission. We look forward to Director Farmer's contributions in the years ahead.

Prairielands GCD Board of Directors

President – Charles Beseda
Term Expires August 31, 2027
Represents Hill County

Vice-President – Paul Tischler
Term Expires August 31, 2029
Represents Johnson County

Secretary/Treasurer – Maurice Osborn
Term Expires August 31, 2027
Represents Ellis County

Director – Marty McPherson
Term Expires August 31, 2029
Represents Somervell County

Director – Gary Farmer
Term Expires August 31, 2029
Represents Ellis County

Director – John Curtis
Term Expires August 31, 2027
Represents Somervell County

Director – Brad Daniels
Term Expires August 31, 2029
Represents Ellis County

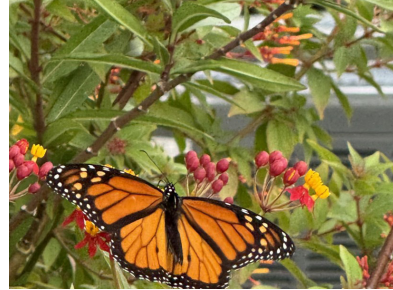
Director – Barney McClure
Term Expires August 31, 2027
Represents Johnson County

Monarch Butterfly Migration Season: Where Rainwater Supports Wildlife

We are excited to showcase photos from the District's natural wildlife habitat located at our office location. This is a living example of how water conservation and habitat restoration work hand in hand.

Habitat restoration is the process of improving or returning land to a healthy, natural state so it can support native plants, wildlife, and essential ecological functions. The District's habitat is sustained by harvested rainwater, creating a thriving environment where monarch butterflies and other pollinators can find food and shelter during migration.

By using rainwater instead of groundwater, the District demonstrates how sustainable practices can reduce demand on local water supplies and support native wildlife. As monarch butterflies pass through our region, this habitat serves as a reminder that even small, water-wise landscapes can make a lasting impact on pollinator survival and groundwater protection.



Staff Spotlight: Christian Hodshire - Field Technician



The District is proud to introduce Christian Hodshire, the newest member of our dedicated field operations team.

Christian brings a strong background in maintenance and a proven ability to learn new skills quickly. These qualities have already made a significant impact on the District's field operations. In his role as Field Technician, Christian can often be found collecting water-level data, installing and maintaining monitoring equipment, and conducting water meter verifications at various well sites. He also assists with verifying well locations, performing field investigations, and working directly with well owners to expand the District's monitor well network.

Before joining the District, Christian spent five years in the maintenance departments of Alvarado ISD and Rio Vista ISD, where he developed valuable technical skills and experience maintaining HVAC systems and other facility operations.

A lifelong resident of Johnson County, Christian enjoys spending his free time on the golf course and following his favorite sports teams.

We're excited to have Christian on the Prairielands GCD team and look forward to his continued contributions to the District's mission.

Prairieland's GCD Recognized as Signature Sponsor of Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors

In August, the District was recognized as a Signature Sponsor of the Texas 4 - H Water Ambassadors Program for 2025. It is an honor to support this statewide youth leadership initiative, which inspires the next generation of Texans to educate themselves about our vital water resources.

The Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors Program was established in 2017 and provides high school students with the opportunity to expand their knowledge and leadership skills related to water science, technology, engineering, and resource management across the state.

Through this hands-on program, ambassadors gain valuable insight into water law, planning, and management by engaging with professionals from state and local water agencies, educators, and policymakers. Participants also develop a deeper understanding of the challenges involved in managing Texas' complex water resources. The program recognizes the vital role water plays in sustaining local, regional, and state economies while also emphasizing the importance of protecting our invaluable water resources for future generations.

Ambassadors are required to complete a minimum of 40 hours of service following participation in the summer Leadership Academy. Service hours include leading water education activities at local 4-H clubs, schools, and community events. Many ambassadors also contribute through presentations, social media outreach, and participation in water-related projects across the state. They can achieve this through virtual platforms or in person.

By investing in programs like the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors, the District continues its mission to foster education, conservation, and stewardship of groundwater resources. Supporting youth leadership initiatives helps ensure that the next generation is equipped with the knowledge and passion to protect Texas' water for years to come.



Growing the next generation of water leaders.

Prairieland's GCD has two 4-H Water Ambassadors within the District:

- Norah Pacheco - Ellis County
- Zane Ball - Johnson County



Grandview FFA Agricultural Issues

Future Farmers of America (“FFA”) students represent the next generation of agricultural leaders, bringing curiosity, skill, and purpose to every opportunity they pursue. During October’s board meeting, members of the Grandview High School FFA Chapter joined the District to present their Agricultural Issues Forum presentation and showcase their knowledge on the use of biosolids and their impacts on the community.

The students’ presentation explored the environmental and agricultural impacts of biosolid land applications, highlighting both the benefits and challenges related to soil health, water quality, economics, and community awareness. Their balanced discussion and professional delivery demonstrated the depth of preparation and teamwork that define successful FFA programs.

District board members and staff, many of whom are former FFA members, enjoyed hearing from the team and appreciated the thoughtful dialogue their presentation encouraged. The District commends the Grandview FFA Ag Issues team for their dedication to agricultural education and wishes them the best of luck as they look to advance in the Agricultural Issues Forum competition.



Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Deadline - December 1, 2025

Time is running out to apply for the District’s Rainwater Harvesting Rebate Program. This initiative helps offset the cost for residents who install rainwater harvesting systems within Ellis, Hill, Johnson, or Somervell counties.

All rebate applications must be submitted by December 1, 2025, to qualify. Don’t miss this opportunity to make your property more water-efficient while contributing to local groundwater conservation efforts.

Act now to secure your rebate and start capturing rainwater for future use. For program details or to request an application, reach out to District staff at 817-556-2299 or go online and visit: <https://www.prairielandsgcd.org/education/rainwater-harvesting/>.



About Prairielands GCD

The Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District was created in response to a finding by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality that groundwater shortages were expected in Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell counties over the next 25 years. The TCEQ finding required local residents to create a groundwater conservation district, or else TCEQ would mandate one. Enabling legislation for the Prairielands GCD was passed in 2009.

The Mission of the Prairielands Groundwater Conservation District is to develop rules to provide protection to existing wells, prevent waste, promote conservation, provide a framework that will allow availability and accessibility of groundwater for future generations, protect the quality of the groundwater in the recharge zone of the aquifer, insure that the residents of Ellis, Hill, Johnson, and Somervell Counties maintain local control over their groundwater, and operate the District in a fair and equitable manner for all residents of the District.

Upcoming Events and Meetings

November

27-28 Thanksgiving Holiday
PGCD Office Closed



December

5 Water Education Trailer
STEAM Aacademy
Burleson, TX

10 Leadership Cleburne
County Day
Cleburne, TX

15 PGCD Board Meeting
9:00 a.m.
208 Kimberly Dr
Cleburne, TX 76031

24-26 Christmas Holiday
PGCD Office Closed

January

1 New Years's Day
PGCD Office Closed

20 PGCD Board Meeting
9:00 a.m.
208 Kimberly Dr
Cleburne, TX 76031

General Manager
Kathy Turner Jones

Board:

President
Charles Beseda
Hill County

Vice President
Paul Tischler
Johnson County

Secretary/Treasurer
Maurice Osborn
Ellis County

Director
Marty McPherson
Somervell County

Director
Gary Farmer
Ellis County

Director
John Curtis
Somervell County

Director
Brad Daniels
Hill County

Director
Barney McClure
Johnson County

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