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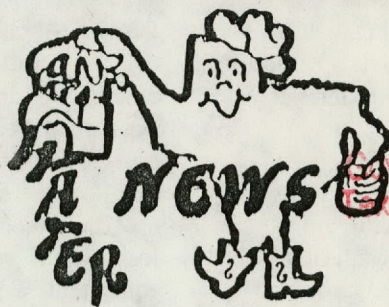
**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

John Spearman, *President*  
Frank Simms, *Vice-President*  
Charles Bowers, *Secretary*  
Phillip Smith, *Director*  
Jerry Green, *Director*  
Jim Thompson, *Director*

**STAFF**

C. E. Williams, *District Manager*  
Yvonne Thomas, *Administrative Assistant*  
Leslie P. Cleek, *Field/Lab Technician*

**PANHANDLE**



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APRIL 1994

**JAMES COPE RETIRES FROM BOARD**

Board Members and staff of Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3 honored Mr. James Cope with an appreciation dinner in Amarillo on February 9, 1994. Mr. Cope was one of the persons who worked diligently for the annexation of Armstrong County into the Panhandle Ground Water District. He had served as Precinct No. 6 director on the Board of Directors since November of 1992. He declined to seek re-election in the January 15, 1994, election. Mr. Jim Thompson was elected to fill that position.

**BOARD CALLS FOR ELECTION IN ROBERTS COUNTY**

The Board of Directors of Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3 met Wednesday, March 16, 1994. At this meeting, the Board called for a special election on May 7, 1994. The purpose of this election is the annexation of the remainder of Roberts County into the District. Approximately one-fourth of Roberts County is already in the Water Conservation District.

A petition, signed by more than 70 landowners in Roberts County requesting annexation of the remainder of the county into the District, was presented to the Board at their January meeting.

The Board accepted the petition and held two hearings on the proposed annexation. The first hearing was held in the PGWCD office on February 23. This hearing was for persons already in the District to express their feelings about the proposed annexation. The second hearing, held in the Miami High School Auditorium on March 10, was to allow persons in Roberts County to express their opinions about joining the District.

The election is open only to registered voters in Roberts County who are not already in the Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District.

**C. E. WILLIAMS SELECTED FOR PPCAB**

On February 1, 1994, C. E. Williams, manager of Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3, was chosen as one of the first eight board members for the Pantex Plant Citizen's Advisory Board. The eight were chosen by a selection committee after several months of meetings. These eight members will nominate twelve more, then the entire board list will be submitted to the Energy Department for approval.

When complete, the Board will be an independent group that will advise the DOE and various state and federal agencies that regulate Pantex on health, safety, environmental, and waste-management issues.

**JIM THOMPSON ELECTED TO BOARD**

Director elections were held January 15, 1994, in Precincts No. 2, No. 4, and No. 6. Directors elected to represent those areas are: Precinct No. 2 (eastern Carson County and a portion of northeastern Armstrong County) Frank Simms; Precinct No. 4 (southern Gray County and northern Donley County) Charles Bowers; Precinct No. 6 (remaining portion of Armstrong County) Jim Thompson.

Simms and Bowers were incumbents. Jim Thompson is new to the Board.

Jim, his wife Sandy, and their children live and farm in northwestern Armstrong County.

**WILLIAMS ATTENDS TWCA CONVENTION IN DALLAS**

C. E. and Kay Williams were in Dallas February 16-18 for the 50th Annual Convention of the Texas Water Conservation Association.

The convention, held at Westin Galleria Hotel featured exhibits, speakers on Water Laws, Water Resource Development & Management, Water Quality and Policy, and business meetings of the various panels.

Mr. Williams is a member of the T.W.C.A. Board of Directors, ground water panel.

The spouse program included visits to points of interest in the Dallas area and a shopping trip.

Guest speaker at the ending session was State Representative Ron Lewis.

**WATER WORDS**

Traverse the desert, and then ye can tell  
What treasures exist in the cold deep well  
Sink in despair on the red parched earth  
And then ye may reckon what water is worth  
Miss Eliza Cook

**LEPA IRRIGATION VIDEO AVAILABLE**

Water for crops is the main limiting factor of agriculture in the Texas High Plains. Irrigation, especially with center pivots, has increased productivity dramatically for this rich agricultural region. Instead of spraying water high in the air, newer center pivots called LEPA, or Low Energy Precision Application, deliver water directly to plants. LEPA systems have nozzles lower to the ground, drops spaced closer together, and much lower operating pressure so they save on operating costs.

More than just hardware, LEPA is an irrigation and tillage management system designed to eliminate nearly all evaporation losses. A properly designed and managed system incorporating all the technology is 98% efficient. Producers have a slightly higher initial installation investment but realize substantial savings in operating costs and use far less water-saving water for future producers.

A video on LEPA irrigation systems is now available for producers, landowners, and anyone interested in water conservation. "LEPA--Saving Water for Future Producers" presents the various aspects of LEPA center pivots for producers to consider, to be more informed consumers. The 30 minute video incorporates interviews with 18 producers and experts from the High Plains talking about their experiences with LEPA.

The video was a joint project produced by Pam Alspaugh, Video Services, Office of News & Publications, Texas Tech University with grant funds from the Water Resources Center in the College of Engineering, Texas Tech University. Texas Agricultural Extension Service supported the project with additional funds.

These tapes can be borrowed from the Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District office. They can also be ordered for \$10 (checks payable to Texas Tech) from Texas Tech University, Video Services, Box 42022, Lubbock, Texas 79409-2022.

Saving water means more profit for producers and water for future generations of producers. LEPA systems are an excellent way to conserve water resources for the High Plains.

**EPA RESPONDS TO FARMERS**

The Environmental Protection Agency responded to the concerns of area farmers by stating in writing that irrigation well engines are not subject to enhanced monitoring.

U.S. congressmen and Texas government officials asked, on behalf of those concerned farmers, that EPA address the wording of a new regulation being proposed.

In a form letter sent to all those who inquired, EPA stated, "We have researched the issue you have raised, and have determined that natural gas-fired irrigation engines are not currently subject to any federally enforceable Clean Air Act requirements. Hence, they are not subject to the proposed regulations."

U.S. Rep. Bill Sarpalius, D-Amarillo, said, "There was a tremendous outpouring of support from farmers throughout the 13th Congressional District on this issue and I want them to know that their letters and calls made a difference on this issue."

U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm, R-Texas, said the announcement by EPA ends an intense threat posed to the livelihood of thousands of Texas farmers.

"I am pleased with the EPA's clarification of the proposed rule, which exempts clean natural-gas fueled engines used to power irrigation equipment from these costly monitoring standards," Gramm said.

"This program threatened both our family farms and our efforts to gain badly needed economic development, and I am happy that this issue is resolved," he said.

**1994 WINTER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS COMPLETED**

The annual depth-to-water measurements were completed the first of March. Measurements were taken in 365 observation wells located throughout the District.

Field technician Leslie Cleek takes the measurement by lowering a steel tape to the depth of the current static water level inside the observation well. The lower ten to fifteen feet of the tape is coated with blue carpenters' chalk. When the chalk comes in contact with the ground water, it turns a darker shade of blue. This section of wetted tape is subtracted from the total amount of tape lowered into the well to determine the depth-to-water from land surface.

After the depth-to-water-level is taken, the data is recorded and a red vinyl sticker showing the well number, the depth-to-water measurement, and the date the well was measured is affixed to equipment at the well site.

The observation wells are measured each year, and the data collected is compared with that of previous years to determine any changes in the ground water levels of the Ogallala Aquifer within the Water District service area. This data is used to construct maps showing changes in water levels of the aquifer within the District.

The annual depletion map for the I. R. S. tax depletion allowance will be constructed from these measurements.

**NEW AG LOAN APPROVED**

The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) approved a \$930,000 loan to Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3 at their January meeting in Austin.

The District will, in turn, loan this money to farmers within the District for Agricultural Water Conservation Equipment Loans. This money is to be used to purchase low energy, low pressure sprinkler systems, surge flow valves, in-line flow meters, furrow dikers, etc.

The interest rate on this loan is 4.8% for the term of the loan which can be for a maximum of 8 years for new equipment. Equipment purchased with this money can be new or used and requires a minimum 20% down payment

At the present time, the District has approved loan applications that will consume \$345,000 of the loan money. Applications for loans and details are available at the District office. If you are interested in this program, please don't hesitate to contact us.



**WHY CONSERVE WATER IN TEXAS?**

Fresh water is a nonrenewable resource in many parts of Texas. In some areas, groundwater is being used faster than aquifers can be recharged. In other areas, existing surface water sources cannot supply increased demands that are expected in the future.

Even today, Texans are threatened by possible water shortages. Studies indicate that the total dependable water supply in the state would fall short of demand by approximately 1.7 million acre-feet (one acre-foot is 325,851 gallons) each year during an extended drought.

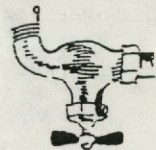
Because agriculture accounts for about two-thirds of the water used in Texas, the most significant reductions in statewide water use are possible in irrigation. In fact, more efficient irrigation practices in the agricultural sector alone could reduce annual statewide water use by about two million acre-feet per year while still producing the same quantities of crops. Reducing water use in agricultural operations could also make more water immediately available for use in cities, for other industries, for recreation and wildlife, and for the production of food and fiber in future years.

Across Texas, only about 60 to 70 percent of the water used for irrigation actually reaches crops. The rest is lost through inefficient irrigation equipment and practices. But by using readily-available technology, efficiency could be improved to 75 to 80 percent while maintaining the same irrigated acreage. By maintaining the same irrigated acreage with less water, farmers can also save money.

*Texas Water Development Board*

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Use what you need, then turn it off!



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