

P050.6

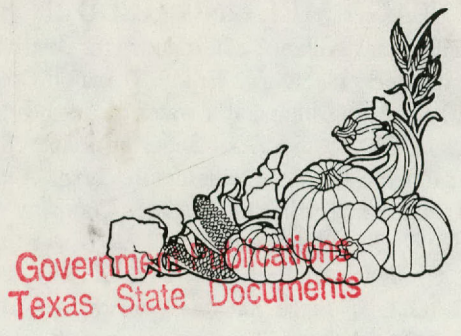
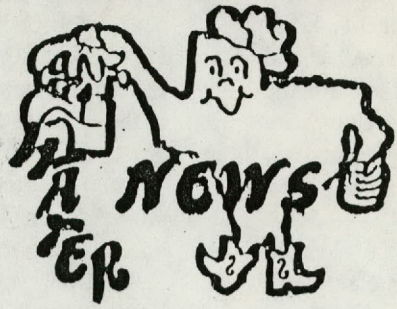
P193

94/10

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
 John Spearman, *President*
 Frank Simms, *Vice-President*
 Charles Bowers, *Secretary*
 Phillip Smith, *Director*
 Jerry Green, *Director*
 Jim Thompson, *Director*
 Robert A. Clark, *Director*

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

PANHANDLE



DEC 29 1994

Depository
 Dallas Public Library

OCTOBER 1994

C. RUSSELL McCONNELL 1915 - 1994

Memorial services were held on September 17th at First Presbyterian Church in Pampa for C. Russell McConnell. Mr. McConnell died on September 14, 1994.

Mr. McConnell, a farmer and rancher in Carson and Gray counties, had served on the Board of Directors of Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3 from October 1955 until February 1969.

McConnell was a member of the original committee that petitioned the Texas Board of Water Engineers to hold a hearing for the purpose of delineating a groundwater conservation subdivision comprising parts of Roberts, Gray, Potter, Armstrong, Donley and Carson counties. The petition to create the district was granted at the hearing held in Panhandle, Texas, on October 5, 1955. McConnell was one of five men appointed by the State Board of Water Engineers to serve as directors until an election could be held. At this election, the voters would elect to accept or reject the Water District and would elect directors, if the formation of the District was approved. Voters of Carson and Gray counties approved the formation of the District at the election held January 21, 1956. At that time, the voters of Precinct No. 3 elected McConnell to represent them on the Board of Directors. He served as the first secretary on the Board and later as vice-president, a position he held until he retired from the Board in 1969.

PGWCD owes Mr. McConnell a debt of gratitude for his efforts toward getting the District formed and his many years of dedicated service on the Board of Directors.

PGWCD RECEIVES TWDB LOAN

The Texas Water Development Board has approved loans totaling \$6.6 million to five underground water conservation districts.

The loans approved include: \$4 million to High Plains U.W.C.D. in Lubbock; \$1,000,000 to South Plains U.W.C.D. in Brownfield; \$600,000 to Evergreen U.W.C.D. in Jourdanton; **\$500,000 to Panhandle G.W.C.D. in White Deer;** and \$500,000 to Sandy Land U.W.C.D. in Plains.

The low interest rate offered by the Board results from securing \$1.2 million in U.S. Department of Energy, Oil Overcharge Funds provided through a grant from the state's General Services Commission. These funds will be used to buy down the interest rate on a \$7 million block of Agricultural Water Conservation bonds to be sold by the Board in October.

The water conservation districts will offer this money to farmers for the purchase of low pressure, energy efficient sprinkler systems, surge flow valves, in-line flow meters, furrow dikers, etc.

DIRECTORS SET BUDGET AND TAX RATE

Following a budget hearing on Wednesday, August 31, the Board of Directors of Panhandle Ground Water Conservation District No. 3 adopted a budget of \$181,25 for the 1994-1995 fiscal year.

The tax rate remained the same at \$0.0085 per \$100 valuation. This is the same tax rate the District has had for the last three years.

SHOULD ARKANSAS RIVER SHINER BE AN ENDANGERED SPECIES?

The U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is proposing to list the Arkansas River Shiner on the endangered species list. The shiner is a small fish confined to the Arkansas River drainage in Arkansas, Kansas, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.

The USFWS stated, "Historically, the Arkansas River Shiner was abundant and widespread throughout the Arkansas River and its major tributaries. However, within the last 20 years, this species has disappeared from over 80 percent of its historic range, with the Arkansas River Shiner population now almost entirely restricted to the Canadian/South Canadian River in New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas."

The USFWS claims that the shiner is threatened by "habitat destruction and modification from stream dewatering or depletion due to diversion of surface water and excessive groundwater pumping."

Should the USFWS be successful in having the shiner listed on the endangered species list, area residents could ultimately suffer hardships in order to preserve a few minnows in the Canadian River--which are known to be abundant in other areas, such as the Pecos River of New Mexico.

The Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, requires that any creature placed on the endangered or threatened list must be protected. In 1993, the Sierra Club and others filed law suits against the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service for not protecting the designated endangered species around Comel Springs. Federal Judge Lucius D. Bunton III ruled in favor of the Sierra Club and others and now has full control of their habitat, the Edwards Aquifer. He agreed to allow the Texas Legislature to pass legislation to create the Edwards Aquifer Authority to regulate the aquifer to protect the endangered species. The judgement he issued contained numerous "Findings of Fact" related to minimum spring flow requirements, natural recharge to the aquifer, maximum annual withdrawals which should not be exceeded, etc. The Texas Legislature utilized these in the legislation they passed to create the Edwards Aquifer Authority. It appears the same thing could happen to the Ogallala High Plains Aquifer if the USFWS is successful in listing the Arkansas River Shiner as an endangered species.

Similar Federal Court Mandates in the Texas High Plains could likely require reducing pumpage to the rate of natural recharge. This could reduce groundwater pumpage to about 20 percent of the current rate. Possible required releases of water from Lake Meredith, and probable prevention of the plan to block the salt springs which currently flows into Lake Meredith, would significantly reduce our public water supply from this source.

State Senator Teel Bivins of Amarillo, as well as Rep. Warren Chisum of Pampa, John Smithee of Amarillo, David Swinford of Dumas, and C. E. Williams, PGWCD manager, have all asked the USFWS to conduct public hearings on plans to designate the shiner as an endangered species.

We urge you to keep informed about these issues. Contact your Congressmen and the USFWS regarding this threat to private property rights and our public water supplies. Attend meetings and hearings on the issues of interest. Only by keeping informed of the proposals and all their ramifications can you decide which side you should support.

TAGD MEETING HELD IN BRADY

The Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD) held their quarterly meeting in Brady, Texas on October 3-5, 1994.

The meeting included a water quality testing seminar and a tour of the Roddie Wool Scouring Plant. Speakers for the seminar were Dr. Dale Pennington, Texas A & M University Soil Chemist; Terry Smith, Hach Company Representative, Loveland, CO; Phil Nordstrom, TWDB, Austin; and Margaret Hart, Groundwater Section of TNRCC.

TAGD is made up of groundwater districts located throughout the state. They hold quarterly meetings and work shops to help keep their members informed and up to date on issues that affect groundwater.

TEXAS-OGALLALA AQUIFER MANAGEMENT PLAN

C. E. Williams met recently with several underground water district managers and directors at the High Plains U.W.C.D. office in Lubbock. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss a water management plan for the Ogallala Aquifer in Texas.

The proposed plan would be developed primarily by (and specifically for) those water users and taxpayers in the part of the state overlying the Ogallala Aquifer. As presently conceived, the plan would compliment, but extend well beyond, the Texas Water Plan and The Texas Water Development Board's other planning efforts. It would be specific to our particular region, and would contain details of the area's water quality and quantity concerns. Among those concerns are economic issues and conservation options.

An organizational meeting will be held on October 18, 1994, at the High Plains District office. During this meeting, a preliminary outline of the final product, a plan for involving key groups and individuals in the overall effort, and a schedule for accomplishing the objectives will be presented.

PGWCD PARTICIPATES IN PLANNED PET WEATHER NETWORK

A weather station network similar to the South Plains Potential Evapotranspiration (PET) Network at Lubbock is being developed for the North Plains. The NP-PET network will integrate several automated weather stations to provide growers/consultants/agencies access to needed weather information for irrigation scheduling and crop development purposes. Initially stations at Bushland, Etter, and Morse will be used. In 1995, additional station sites will possibly be established at Dimmitt, Dalhart, Pampa, Quail, and Turkey. This network will provide PET, soil temperature, growing degree days, and other information to subscribers via FAX or a computer bulletin-board.

The District will help with this project by requesting funds from the Texas Water Development Board to be used for the purchase of equipment and installation costs. We will supply more information on this as it becomes available.

WELL REGISTRATION REQUIRED

Landowners should be aware that prior to drilling a new house well or livestock well, you must come by, or call, the PGWCD office to get a Well Registration Form and well registration number. Please supply the following information to the office:

- 1) Legal description of the property;
- 2) Location of the well (number of feet to the nearest property lines) ie. distance to north or south property or section line, distance to east or west property or section line;
- 3) Upon completion or plugging of the well, a copy of the Driller's Log must be filed with the District.

Note: A \$100.00 deposit is required when the Well Registration Form is obtained. This is refunded in full, when the completed Driller's Log is received in our office.

TNRCC HOLDS GROUND WATER PROTECTION CONFERENCE

C. E. Williams recently attended the Texas Natural Resource Conservation Commission's International Ground Water Protection Conference. This year, the Ninth Annual Ground Water Protection Seminar was held in El Paso, Texas.

The seminar was designed to educate local officials, as well as the general public, on how they can protect their ground water supply from contaminants that could adversely affect public health.

Keynote speaker was Carol Browner, Administrator, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Washington, D.C.

Subjects addressed included local drinking water problems, wellhead protection, brackish water usage, ground water fundamentals and potential sources of contamination.

UPCOMING LEGISLATIVE ISSUES

The Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts' (TAGD) Legislative Committee met during the quarterly meeting in Brady, Texas on October 3-5. At this meeting, the Committee agreed to research several issues to be brought before the 1995 State Legislature. Among those are the following issues:

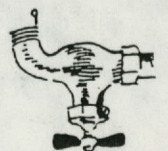
- * Re-codification of Chapter 52 water districts into a new chapter of the Texas Water Code; Title 2, State Water Administration, Subtitle E, Groundwater Management;
- * to create a plugging fund for the proper closure of abandoned water wells;
- * to increase the funding for groundwater data acquisition and management;
- * to provide additional funding for the Wellhead Protection Program;
- * that TNRCC Commissioners be increased from 3 to 6 and that their appointments come from different geographical areas of the State.

They are also preparing a resolution to:

- * Texas Parks and Wildlife Dept. opposing the Red Fox and the Arkansas River Shiner being listed on the USFWS Endangered Species Listing.

PANHANDLE WATER NEWS is published by PANHANDLE GROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT, P.O. Box 637, 300 S. Omohundro St., White Deer, TX 79097. Subscriptions are free upon request.

Use what you need,
then turn it off!



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

PANHANDLE GROUND WATER
CONSERVATION DISTRICT NO. 3
P.O. BOX 637
WHITE DEER, TEXAS 79097

