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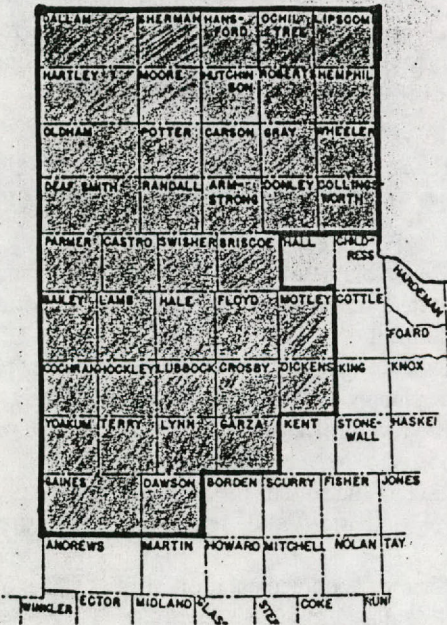
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Region A

INITIAL DRAFT OF REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREAS

In delineating the regional water supply planning areas, the Texas Water Development Board started with an accepted regional depiction of a factor important to water planning, climate. The National Weather Service's ten Climatic Divisions have not changed since 1959. The Climatic Divisions evolved into the Delineated Planning Areas via a process involving ten major parameters; each county of each Area was evaluated based on whether the county "passed" or "violated" the parameter. The ten parameters, in order of their importance, are as follows:

1. City splits - A city should not be split between areas. A small number of towns straddling county lines were split, however.
2. Surface water connection splits - The link between a demand and its associated surface water source from the 1997 State Water Plan data bases for 2000 and 2020 should not be split.
3. Groundwater connection splits - the link between a demand and its associated groundwater source from the 1997 State water plan data bases for 2000 and 2020 should not be split.
4. Large water provider service area splits - The service area of a river authority or other large water providing entity should not be split.
5. River basin splits - A river basin should not be split. However, a river basin map of Texas shows that many counties are split between river basins and a effort was made to assign counties to basins based on area.
6. Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) splits - Areas with recent or on-going regional planning should not be split.
7. Past or Recent Regional Study Area splits - Areas with recent or on-going regional planning should not be split.
8. Aquifer splits - The major and minor aquifers of the state should not be split.
9. Groundwater District boundaries splits - A ground water district jurisdiction should not be split.
10. Reconciliation with written public comments received from entities recommending specific planning areas for TWDB consideration - To the largest extent possible without

violating higher parameters, TWDB staff sought to accommodate all public comments received.

Following the designation of regional water planning areas, TWDB will designate regional water planning group representatives from within each Area to serve as the initial coordinating body to include at least one representative from each of the following interests: public, counties, municipalities, industries, agricultural interests, environmental interests, small businesses, electric generating utilities, river authorities, water districts, and water utilities.

The regional water plan will provide for the development, management, and conservation of water resources and preparation for and response to drought conditions in order that sufficient water will be available at a reasonable cost to ensure public health, safety, and welfare; further economic development; and protect agricultural and natural resources of the regional water planning area.

The regional water planning group must prepare, adopt, and submit a regional water plan to the executive administrator on or before September 1, 2000.

Approved regional water plans will be incorporated into a comprehensive statewide water plan that will be adopted by the TWDB. The state water plan will cover a 50-year planning period that provides for the orderly development, management, and conservation of water resources and preparation for and response to drought conditions, in order that sufficient water will be available at a reasonable cost to ensure public health, safety, and welfare, further economic development and protect the agricultural and natural resources of the entire state. The state water plan will be developed and adopted by the Board no later than September 1, 2001, and at least every five years thereafter.

In comments to the TWDB, the District has stated that having Region A cover all of the Ogallala Aquifer makes the region too large. It encompasses approximately 25 million acres and contains seven groundwater conservation districts. It is also larger than the following thirteen states: Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Indiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Vermont, and West Virginia. It's doubtful that many, if any, residents would drive 275 miles to attend a Regional Meeting. It is the District's suggestion that there should be at least two regions for the Ogallala Aquifer.

TWDB invites public comment on its initial draft delineation of regional planning areas and of its initial draft of guidance relating to the state water plan, regional water plans, and use of research and planning funds for regional water plan development. Copies of the draft are available at the District office. We will be happy to mail you a copy.

Public meetings for our area will be held on Oct. 28th in Panhandle at the Hazelwood Bldg. and Oct. 30th in Plainview at the Plainview Country Club. Both meetings will be from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m. The final hearing will be held on November 3rd in Austin at the SFA Bldg., also at 6:30 p.m. We strongly encourage everyone to attend one or all of these meetings if at all possible.

After review of public comments, TWDB staff will revise these drafts, and provide second drafts for public comment on or about November 19, 1997.

WHEELER COUNTY JOINS DISTRICT

After canvassing the returns in the annexation election held Saturday, August 9, 1997, the Board of Directors declared all of Wheeler County now a part of the District.

Voters showed their approval by a total vote of 363 to 142. County Commissioners' Precincts 1 & 2 approved the annexation by a margin of 218 to 82. In County Commissioners' Precincts 3 & 4, the vote was 145 to 60. This allowed all of the county to become part of the groundwater district.

The Board of Directors and staff welcome Wheeler County into the District. Along with Wheeler County, the District now includes all or part of Armstrong, Carson, Donley, Gray, Hutchinson, Hemphill, Potter, and Roberts counties.

BOARD APPOINTS DIRECTOR TO REPRESENT WHEELER COUNTY

The Board of Directors asked the Wheeler County Water Conservation steering committee to recommend a person to serve as their representative on the Board. Their recommendation was Danny Hardcastle. At the Board meeting on September 4, 1997, the Board appointed Mr. Hardcastle to serve as Director of Precinct 8 (Wheeler County) until the next regular Director's Elections, which will be held in January 1998. Mr. Hardcastle accepted the appointment and vowed to represent the citizens of Wheeler County to the best of his ability.

At the January election, voters will have the opportunity to vote on a director for their precinct.

DISTRICT HOSTS T.A.G.D. MEETING IN JULY

On July 14, the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts held their summer meeting in the Panhandle Ground Water District's "Windmill Room." Board members and staff from most of the Alliance's twenty-nine groundwater districts met to discuss the effects, rules and regulations of Senate Bill 1. This Bill, which was signed earlier this year by Gov. George Bush, became law on September 1, 1997.

Others attending the meeting included Sen. Tom Haywood, Wichita Falls; Rep. Tracy O. King, Uvalde; Rep. Gary L. Walker, Plains; Ms. Liz True, representing Sen. Teel Bivins; Mr. John McFerrin, representing Speaker Pete Laney; Mr. Tommy Knowles and Mr. John Ashworth of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB).

Mr. Knowles and Mr. Ashworth addressed the districts' concerns over property rights, rules and regulations in regard to Senate Bill 1. The Bill deals with water planning, drought, conservation, development, management, marketing and transfer of Texas groundwater into the 21st century.

According to Mr. Knowles, input from the water districts is extremely important, to make the transitions go as smoothly as possible.

That evening, the group traveled to Palo Duro Canyon where they ate chuck wagon barbeque and attended "TEXAS."

WATER QUALITY TESTING COMPLETED

District staff has completed collecting water samples for the annual Water Quality Testing Program. Approximately 275 wells were tested for iron, ammonia sulfate, chloride, nitrate, fluoride, hardness, alkalinity, conductivity, pH, and total dissolved solids. Wells in this program, located throughout six counties, were selected by accessibility and location. By request, a number of wells were also tested for coliform bacteria. We are unable to test each and every well within the District, but if you think you might have a problem with your water, please contact our office. We will be happy to run tests and do whatever we can to help you. Tests are free to residents residing within the District.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPTS BUDGET AND TAX RATE

On August 13, following a hearing on the proposed budget, the Board set the 1997-1998 budget at \$290,700. A hearing was held August 27, on the proposed tax rate. At a special meeting on September 4, the Board adopted a tax rate of \$0.012347 per \$100 valuation for the 1997 tax year.

SB 1 CREATES COMMITTEE TO STUDY WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT

A 10-member committee was created by Senate Bill 1 to study the State's water supply and wastewater infrastructure needs. The committee will:

1. Review Texas' current inventory of water resources, including water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure.
2. Review projections for Texas' future water and wastewater needs to the year 2050.
3. Review the role of the state and regional and local entities in participation and investment in water-related projects.
4. Review the implementation of SB 1, Acts of the 75th Legislature, Regular Session, 1997.

Members of the committee are Rep. Ron Lewis and Sen. J. E. "Buster" Brown, co-chairmen; Senators Jeff Wentworth, Eddie Lucio, Ken Armbrister, and Carlos Truan; and Representatives David Counts, Gary L. Walker, Robby Cook, and Robert Puente.

The committee will submit its final report, containing their findings and recommendations for necessary legislation to the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House, Members of the 76th Legislature, and others, by January 5, 1999.

In the interim, the committee is scheduled to hold monthly hearings around the State. The first public hearing will be in Lubbock on October 29, 1997, in the International Culture Center at Texas Tech University, 6th & Indiana Streets, at 1:00 p.m. This will be an excellent opportunity for us to make our feelings known on the provisions and implementation of SB 1 and other related water issues. We urge you to attend if possible.

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When the well runs dry, there
is no more.



ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

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