

# Panhandle Water News



Government Publications  
Texas State Documents

October 2001

FEB 25 2002

Depository  
Dallas Public Library

## CRMWA FILES PROTEST TO MESA WATER'S HIGH IMPACT PRODUCTION PERMIT REQUEST

T. Boone Pickens and several other Roberts County landowners, collectively known as Mesa Water, Inc., filed requests with the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District for High Impact Production Permits in September 2000. Mesa Water, Inc. has secured more than 150,000 acres of water rights in Roberts County and plans to send water to Dallas/Ft. Worth, El Paso, or San Antonio. Pickens, who is also a Roberts County rancher, and his neighbors felt that they had no choice but to try and sell their water before CRMWA and the City of Amarillo sucked the water from beneath their ranches. A hearing was held on the requested permits in February. At this hearing, the permits were tabled because they were deemed administratively incomplete. One of the reasons for this ruling was that no buyer was named in the permit requests. Mesa attorneys said they do not have a buyer yet and need the permits in order obtain one.

Canadian River Municipal Water Authority (CRMWA) supplies water to eleven cities in the Texas Panhandle and South Plains. Several years ago they purchased 40,000 acres of water rights in Roberts County. In January 1996, the District granted them a permit to pump one acre-foot of water annually for each acre of water rights they hold. They plan to mix water from the Roberts County well field with water from Lake Meredith to improve the quality, as well as the quantity, of water for the authority's member cities.

On June 21, 2001, CRMWA filed a letter of protest against Mesa's plans to pump water downstate. According to CRMWA general manager John C. Williams, their concern is that Mesa's wells would harm the operation of the water authorities' Roberts County well field. In July, Roberts County landowners, Mr. & Mrs. Walter Killebrew, filed a similar protest against Mesa.

A preliminary hearing was conducted at the District office in White Deer on September 6, 2001, to present information on who will be involved in the protest against Mesa. Senior Judge John T. Forbis of Childress presided over the preliminary hearing. At this hearing, the parties to the dispute laid out their positions before Judge Forbis and argued who should be a party to the protest.

On September 21, Judge Forbis released his decision that all those parties represented at the hearing should have standing to present their positions during a hearing to be held in January. He stated, "Those interests are representative of all areas of thought which I can think of, and they are not so numerous as to make our hearing unduly burdensome. Their inclusion will also allow us to make a record of the completeness needed for proper judicial review."

Meanwhile, on August 13, Mesa Water, Inc. filed a lawsuit against CRMWA, under the Private Real Property Takings Act, claiming their 27 new wells will drain groundwater from beneath land owned by Pickens and other landowners in Roberts County. The first hearing date was October 18, 2001. CRMWA's well field was originally scheduled to begin operating in May, but delays in electrical service installations has delayed pumping.

On October 11, the Board of Directors passed a resolution declaring the disputed permits administratively complete. General Manager C. E. Williams said, "The resolution passed by the Board will simply allow the contested hearing to continue. It does not mean that the District has approved the permit. Judge Forbis will gather the facts of the case and take testimony. After that, he will make a recommendation to the Board. The final decision on whether to issue Mesa's permit lies with the District's Board of Directors."

The contested case trial is scheduled to begin on January 21, 2002.

## GROUNDWATER DISTRICT LOWERS TAX RATE

**White Deer** - At their meeting on September 6, 2001, the Board of Directors of Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District voted to lower the District's tax rate, once again. According to C. E. Williams, general manager of the groundwater district, this marks the second year in a row that the District has been able to lower the tax rate. "This is due largely to effective management of the District and the annexation of the majority of Potter County into the District in August 2000," Williams said.

The Board set the tax rate for 2001 at \$0.0156/\$100 taxable value. This means that the taxes on a \$40,000 home would be \$6.24. The current tax rate is \$0.0172/\$100. The 1999 tax rate was \$0.0214/\$100.

---

### MEET KARI K. WILSON



Joining the District on September 4, 2001, Kari's official title is secretary, but she's quickly becoming indispensable in many areas, as she assists all members of the staff. Her willing attitude and ready smile have quickly endeared her to staff members.

Although Kari was raised near Denver, Colorado, she was born in Pampa and returned there in 1992. She and husband

Joel, a jailor for the Gray County Sheriff's Department, are the parents of two sons, Perry, age 15, and Joshua, 16 months.

She graduated from West Texas A&M University with a Bachelor of Science in Social Work, and has worked primarily in that field since her graduation. She worked with Children's Protective Services for 3 1/2 years and in Juvenile Probation for 9-months.

Hobbies include gardening (when it's not too hot), reading, and spending time with her family.

It's a pleasure to welcome Kari to Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District.

### WATER QUALITY SEASON COMES TO AN END

*Bart Wyatt, Education/Water Quality*

With the last of the water quality samples picked up in Potter County, the Water Quality Program has ended for the year. Two hundred eighty-two different sites throughout the District were scheduled for water gathering this season. Out of these several sites, only eight samples were missed, due mainly to broken sucker rods or locked gates at the point of entrance. Of these 274 samples tested, 41 (15%) were high in iron. Twenty-five samples (61%) were taken from windmills. Rusting pipes are usually the main cause of water being high in iron content. Forty-five samples (16%) were above state standards in sulfate content. This increase in sulfate content is due to the increase in the number of wells added to the Water Quality Program in areas located over the Dockum aquifer. This aquifer, characteristically, is known for its higher amounts of sulfate in the water. While 13 samples (5%) were above state standards in chloride content, less than 1%, two samples, were found to be high in fluoride. None of the samples taken measured high in nitrate content.

Thank you for another successful water quality season. Over 97% of all scheduled sites had water sampled from them. Without your cooperation and participation, this would not be possible. If you ever have a question, please don't hesitate to call us or look us up on the web site. We are looking forward to serving you again next year!

### DISTRICT METERING PROGRAM STATUS FEBRUARY-SEPTEMBER 2001

*Ray Brady, Geologist*

The District's metering program has been expanded and continues to provide valuable information for water conservation planning. Thus far in 2001, an additional 144 meters have been purchased with 84 meters purchased for the North Plains District and 60 for the Panhandle Groundwater District. Additional meters were added to the existing groups in Roberts and Carson counties and others were installed in new locations in the Kelton, Wheeler, and Washburn areas. Two meters purchased and installed by others were added to the meter reading system, giving the District access to 173 meters. Currently, we are reading 161 meters monthly. Eleven more are pending installation, of which three have confirmed installation locations, and six more are pending arrangements with the landowner.

This past summer, we prepared and mailed out summaries of the data collected for the 1999 - 2000 crop year to the participating operators. We are now preparing a summary report covering the first two years of the program's operation. This report will cover general information, such as a summary of water use by corp, rainfall information, and similar general data.

### PGCD BOOTH AT TRI-STATE FAIR

*Bart Wyatt, Education/Water Quality*

We hope that everyone who visited the Tri-State Fair in Amarillo, from September 14-22, stopped by the District's booth located in the Better Living Center, for a visit with one of our staff members. Working in shifts, Bart Wyatt, Alvin Stamps, and Ray Brady answered questions about "Pickens, pigs, and Pantex." Manager C. E. Williams also took a turn in the booth. With the aid of a laptop and projector, the PGCD staff showed maps and answered questions regarding saturated thicknesses and depths to water across the District. They also handed out many conservation brochures educating the public on ways to conserve water

both inside and outside the home. Not only could a person pick up conservation literature, but anyone wanting to sign up for our quarterly PGCD newsletter was encouraged to do so. A groundwater flow model was also on display showing how groundwater moves below the earth's surface. The "ant farm" was a big hit with many fair goers.

Once again, the PGCD wants to thank everyone for stopping by our booth with your questions and comments.

## GROUNDWATER FLOW MODELING

*Ray Brady, Geologist*

The District is currently involved in four groundwater modeling tasks, at various levels of activity. The first is participation in the Regional Water Planning Group modeling committee, supervising the upgrade of the existing regional model. This model was developed by the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology during the initial round of Senate Bill 1 regional water planning. The current task is to raise the level of performance of the existing model to the state "GAM" standard. The state standard provides objectives and specifications for each regional groundwater model. Improvements to the existing model will increase the modeling capabilities and provide better information for regional planners.

The District has also provided a representative at the periodic briefings on the progress of developing a groundwater availability model for Region O (Lubbock).

The District has a representative on the Groundwater Modeling Technical Advisory Group for Pantex Plant. This Group has the task of recommending a groundwater model (or models) to be used by Pantex to perform the flow analysis portions of their groundwater contamination cleanup activities. The group includes representatives from the Department of Energy, the operating contractor at the plant (BWXT), Los Alamos National Lab, the University of Texas Bureau of Economic Geology, Texas Tech University, the Texas Center for Applied Technology, and other contractor representatives. Two of four scheduled meetings have been completed.

The District has obtained the software and some training to assist our personnel in operating the Regional model to analyze specific problems within the District. Participation in the various modeling projects has improved our understanding of the overall aquifer system within the District, enabled us to better understand responses to expected pressures on the aquifers, and to develop better management strategies for the District.

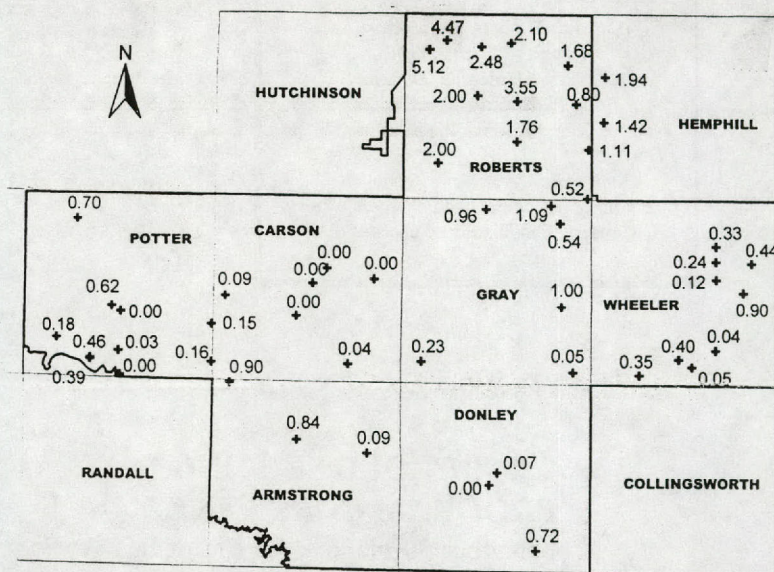
## PROPOSITION 19 TO BE ON NOVEMBER 6 BALLOT

Proposition 19 authorizes the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) to issue up to \$2 billion in additional general obligation (GO) bonds. The TWDB will use the bond proceeds to make low-interest loans to Texas communities for a variety of water supply and water quality projects, flood control and, subject to future state legislative

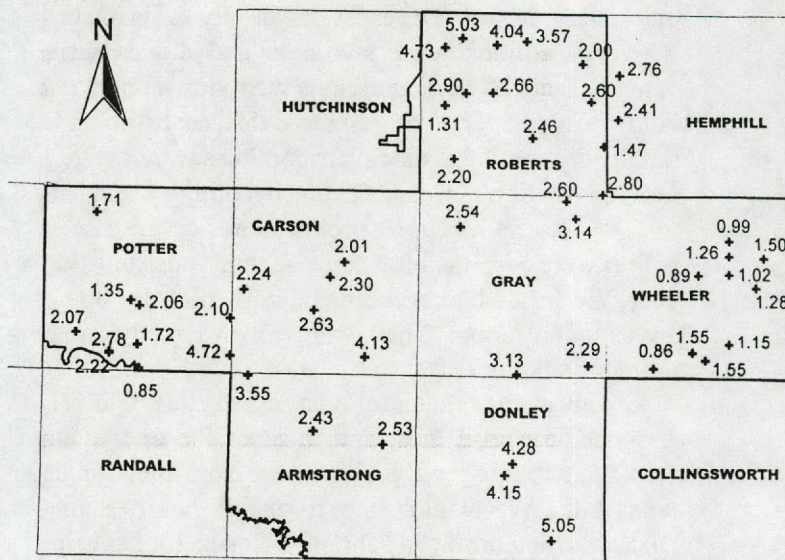
action, state participation projects. Fifty million dollars of the GO bonds is earmarked for the Water Infrastructure Fund, created by Senate Bill 2, 77<sup>th</sup> Texas Legislature. Proposition 19 will also remove the current limitation on the percentage of state participation in regional projects.

The District supports Proposition 19, because it will allow the TWDB, through the State Participation Program, to acquire up to a 100% undivided interest in any single regional project, thereby providing additional assistance to communities for developing regional water, wastewater, or flood control projects.

### Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District Precipitation Enhancement Program Cooperator Rain Gauge Readings July 2001



### August 2001



**DISTRICT OFFICE**  
 201 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> St., PO Box 637  
 White Deer, TX 79097-0637  
 Phone: 806/883-2501  
 FAX: 806/883-2162  
 E-Mail: [cwilliams8@aol.com](mailto:cwilliams8@aol.com)  
[panhandlegroundwater.org](http://panhandlegroundwater.org)

**DISTRICT STAFF**  
 C. E. Williams, *Gen. Manager*  
 Raymond Brady, *Asst. Mgr./Geologist*  
 Yvonne Thomas, *Administrative Assistant*  
 Bart Wyatt, *Education/Field/Lab*  
 Kari K. Wilson, *Secretary*  
 Alvin Stamps, *Field Technician*

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  
 Frank Simms, *President*  
 Charles Bowers, *Vice-President*  
 Jason C. Green, *Secretary*  
 Phillip Smith, *Director*  
 Jim Thompson, *Director*  
 Robert A. Clark, *Director*  
 Danny Hardcastle, *Director*  
 John R. Spearman, Jr., *Director*  
 John McKissack, *Director*

*Panhandle Water News* is published quarterly by the Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District. Subscriptions

PANHANDLE GROUNDWATER  
 CONSERVATION DISTRICT  
 P.O. BOX 637  
 WHITE DEER, TEXAS 79097

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



"CONSERVING WATER FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS"

PRSR STD  
 US POSTAGE PAID  
 WHITE DEER, TX  
 PERMIT NO. 2

## 2001 CLOUD SEEDING PROGRAM COMPLETED

September 30 marked the end of this year's Weather Modification Program. Although the summer months were unusually dry, we still feel that the program was successful. The accompanying chart gives an idea of which counties were seeded on each particular mission. The chart shows only the instances where conditions were favorable and clouds were actually seeded. Some missions were flown that were not fruitful. Several things caused this, such as clouds rapidly dissipating or quickly becoming severe, activity moving out of our area, and cells becoming glaciated.

Chief pilot Herb Speckman, and co-pilot Zack Miller were responsible for the seeding missions this year. We would like to commend both pilots for doing an excellent job. They were always ready on a moment's notice.

Project meteorologist, Shea Lea Clower, resigned in mid-August and most of the operations from that time on were conducted from the Dumas radar site. We would like to thank North Plains District's meteorologist, Christine Lopez, for her help.

The 2002 Program will begin in April.

SUCCESSFUL CLOUD SEEDING MISSIONS FLOWN

Date	Arn.	Carson	Donley	Gray	Hut.	Potter	Roberts	Whe.
May 20		X		X				
May 29								X
June 5				X				
June 12			X					
June 19								X
June 20	X	X		X	X		X	
June 27		X						
June 28						X		
June 29	X	X						
July 16						X	X	
July 26						X		
July 27		X			X	X		
July 28	X	X		X			X	
July 29	X		X					X
Aug. 9	X	X	X	X				
Aug. 10	X	X						
Aug. 11		X			X	X		
Aug. 12					X			
Aug. 24	X	X		X				
Aug. 25		X					X	
Aug. 30	X	X				X		
Sept. 2	X	X	X	X				
Sept. 3						X		
Sept. 4								X
Sept. 19						X		