



Joint Planning For Groundwater Management Area # 2

Monday, January 25, 2021

10:00 AM

HPWD Office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX 79411-2499

**Notice Is Hereby Given That Groundwater Management Area # 2
Representatives
Will Meet Via Video Conference
Pursuant to Governor Abbott's Suspension
Of Certain Provisions Under Texas Gov't Code Section 551.127
As Authorized by the January 5, 2021 Disaster Declaration For COVID-19**

**If you would like to provide public comment, please register at
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_vbitCb2gQDCxwPuOskAoTw
no later than 9:00 A.M. on January 25, 2021.**

**To view the January 25, 2021 GMA # 2 Meeting Agenda and Materials,
Please visit www.gma2.org**

**If you have questions, concerns, or trouble accessing the meeting,
Please contact Gray Sanders at (806) 762-0181 for assistance.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Administrative Officer Jason Coleman called the Groundwater Management Area # 2 (GMA # 2) meeting to order at 10:08 a.m.

Today's meeting was held via videoconference ("Zoom") pursuant to Governor Greg Abbott's Suspension of Certain Provisions Under Texas Government Code Section 551.127 as authorized by the January 5, 2021 Disaster Declaration for COVID-19 (Coronavirus).

2. ROLL CALL AND ESTABLISH QUORUM

Mr. Coleman conducted a roll call of the Groundwater Conservation Districts (GCDs) participating in today's joint planning meeting.

A quorum was present with all of the seven GCDs in GMA 2 represented. (100 percent attendance)

The participating GMA 2 voting representatives were:

* Dicky Wallace, Garza County UWCD.

* Ronnie Hopper, High Plains UWCD.

- * Lori Barnes for Weldon Shook, Llano Estacado UWCD.
- * Jacob Hernandez for Matt Farmer, Mesa UWCD.
- * Amy Bush or Ray Brady, Permian Basin UWCD. (*Manager position is vacant due to Donna Springer's retirement*)
- * Amber Blount for Ross Hilburn, Sandy Land UWCD.
- * Layne Marlow for Matt Hogue, South Plains UWCD.

Mr. Coleman welcomed all GMA # 2 representatives and guests to the meeting.

3. PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Coleman asked for public comment. None was offered and the public comment period ended at this time.

4. MINUTES

May 19, 2020 Virtual Meeting Minutes

Mr. Coleman presented draft minutes of the May 19, 2020 virtual GMA # 2 meeting.

An electronic copy was provided to the member districts for review in advance of today's meeting.

UWCD High Plains made a motion to approve the minutes of the May 19, 2020 virtual GMA # 2 meeting as presented. UWCD Sandy Land seconded the motion. The motion was Approved.

Ayes: Garza, High Plains, Llano Estacado , Mesa, Permian Basin, Sandy Land, South Plains

5. TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD UPDATES

GMA # 2 Liaison Robert Bradley provided the following Texas Water Development Board updates:

The 16 regional water plans were approved by the TWDB at their Jan. 19, 2021 meeting. At the same meeting, the TWDB adopted amendments to 31 Texas Administrative Code 356 relating to brackish groundwater production zones.

Mr. Bradley also mentioned that the TWDB is now accepting applications for Fiscal Year 2021 Agricultural Water Conservation Grants. Applications are due to the TWDB no later than Wednesday, February 10, at 2:00 p.m.

Up to \$1,200,000 in grant funding is available to eligible political subdivisions and state agencies for agricultural water conservation projects that improve irrigation efficiency, enhance resilience to weather extremes and climate variability, and promote innovation in agriculture.

This report is for informational purposes only. No action was taken.

6. AGENDA ITEMS AND UPDATES

Mr. Coleman called for discussion of agenda items and updates from the GMA # 2 member districts.

The GMA # 2 Members Will Hear A Presentation of Simulations in Technical Memorandum 20-01 By Dr. Bill Hutchison.

Mr. Coleman recognized Dr. William R. (Bill) Hutchison, who serves as the GMA # 2 consultant.

Dr. Hutchison reminded the group that there was an earlier request at the May 19, 2020 meeting for additional simulations for Dockum Aquifer pumping in some counties in GMA # 2. He received updated information for Dawson, Gaines, Howard, and Martin Counties.

These data were incorporated into the Technical Memo (TM) 20-01 documents. Based on comments from the May 19, 2020 meeting, Scenario 16 was extended to year 2080. Also, Scenarios 17 to 21 include additional Dockum Aquifer pumping.

The revised TM 20-01 was emailed to the GMA # 2 member districts on Dec. 28, 2020 for review.

The original High Plains Aquifer System (HPAS) Groundwater Availability Model showed no Dockum Aquifer wells in Dawson County; no wells in Gaines County; 29 wells in Howard County; and one well in Martin County.

Revised data from the respective districts now shows six production wells and two injection wells in Dawson County; 13 wells in Gaines County; 71 wells in Howard County; and 161 wells in Martin County. The pumping in the model was updated accordingly.

Dr. Hutchison said the HPAS original pumping for Howard County shows 22 wells with production of 82 acre-feet per year per well or a total of 1,809 acre-feet annually. This is about 10 percent of operation.

This was used as a basis to develop alternative scenarios for each county in GMA # 2.

- Scenario 17: 60 acre-feet per year per well
- Scenario 18: 70 acre-feet per year per well
- Scenario 19: 80 acre-feet per year per well
- Scenario 20: 90 acre-feet per year per well
- Scenario 21: 100 acre-feet per year per well

Dr. Hutchison then reviewed tables illustrating the following:

- Output Dockum Aquifer pumping for Scenarios 16 to 21 for Dawson, Gaines, Howard, and Martin Counties.
- Average drawdown in feet (2013-2080) for the Dockum Aquifer by GMA 2 Counties and respective GCDs.
- Average drawdown in feet (2013-2080) for the Ogallala and Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifers by GMA 2 Counties and respective GCDs.

Dr. Hutchison provided an update on the draft "Explanatory Report For Desired Future Conditions (for the) Ogallala, Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) and Dockum Aquifers (in) Groundwater Management Area # 2."

The 2016 explanatory report has been updated and also includes Appendices A, B, and C. Future work that is needed includes addition of dates for future meetings/public hearings; public comments from District summary reports after voting on proposed DFCs and public hearings; and addition of sections on Howard and Martin Counties regarding recharge/drawdown from the Technical Memo.

Dr. Hutchison briefly reviewed the current scope of work and budget. There will be some adjustments since some of the in-person meetings were held virtually on Zoom. It is hoped that some of the meeting cost savings can be applied to cover the cost of additional simulations. The

proposed remaining budget is \$10,000. This includes two in-person GMA # 2 meetings, response to public comments, finalizing the explanatory report, and submitting it to the TWDB.

Assuming that there is consensus on one of the scenarios presented at today's meeting, Dr. Hutchison outlined the remaining steps in the DFC process.

- Update draft explanatory report
- GMA # 2 meeting in March or April to vote on proposed DFC.
- Start of 90-day comment period.
- Each GCD holds a public hearing on proposed DFC
- Each GCD prepares a summary report of comments received.
- Fall 2021 GMA # 2 meeting to review comments and adopt final DFC.

Mr. Coleman thanked Dr. Hutchison for his report. He asked the GMA # 2 members if they had any questions or comments.

Ms. Bush asked if each individual scenario was applicable for all aquifers. Dr. Hutchison said that it did. If the GMA members chose different scenarios per county, then he would have to run the model simulations again and generate another technical report.

Ms. Bush said the Permian Basin UWCD Board of Directors thought Scenario 19 looked good to them. Ms. Barnes and Mr. Hernandez said this scenario would work for their respective districts as well.

Ms. Blount asked if Scenario 20 would be a better option to consider since water production has increased during the past five years. Dr. Hutchison said that Scenario 19 should work well. He noted that there were some issues with the previous modeling. As an example, some well cells were located outside the official Dockum Aquifer boundary. There were some areas, including Mitchell County, where the model simply does not work well.

Ms. Bush agreed by saying that the new scenarios are far more superior than those in the past.

The GMA # 2 Members Will Consider For Approval One Of The Scenarios Presented in Technical Memorandum 20-01.

After the vote, Dr. Hutchison asked about the change in invoicing that he discussed earlier. Mr. Coleman noted that no official action can be taken today since this item is not on the agenda. However, it is the unofficial consensus of the GMA # 2 members to proceed with Dr. Hutchison's recommendations.

UWCD Permian Basin made a motion to motion to proceed with preparation of the draft Explanatory Report based upon information shown in Scenario 19. UWCD Llano Estacado seconded the motion. The motion was Approved.

Ayes: Garza, High Plains, Llano Estacado , Mesa, Permian Basin, Sandy Land, South Plains

The GMA # 2 Members Will Hear A Presentation About District Rule Changes.

Mr. Coleman asked the GMA # 2 member districts to share information about any proposed or completed rule revisions. He noted that Ms. Blount shared a document comparing the respective GCD rules with the members at the Nov. 15, 2018 GMA # 2 meeting.

Today's reports reflect changes since that meeting

Garza County UWCD -- No upcoming rule revisions anticipated.

HPWD -- The HPWD Board of Directors approved rule revisions following a Nov. 24, 2020 public hearing and special Board of Directors meeting. These revisions were based upon feedback from the District's County Advisory Committee members during a six-month period.

Some of the more substantive revisions include:

- Removing new, non-abutting acreage connected by a water pipeline from the "contiguous acre" plot allocation for pipelines constructed after Jan. 1, 2022;
- Adding a sunset provision to the current Conservation Reserve ("water banking")
- Revised the minimum property line spacing distance for wells completed into the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer.
- Removing the requirement that a pump log be submitted in order for a water well permit to be "administratively complete."

Llano Estacado UWCD -- No rule changes at this time. The District may consider some future revisions to reflect changes in fees and legislative updates.

Mesa UWCD -- No upcoming rule revisions anticipated.

Permian Basin UWCD -- Their last rule change was in 2019. No upcoming rule revisions anticipated. They are looking at ways to encourage use of brackish groundwater stored in the Dockum Aquifer for oil and gas production--rather than fresh water.

Sandy Land UWCD -- No upcoming rule revisions anticipated.

South Plains UWCD -- No upcoming rule revisions anticipated. Attorney Greg Ellis is currently reviewing the District's rules. There could possibly be some policy changes in the future.

This report is for informational purposes only. No action was taken by the GMA # 2 member districts.

7. ITEMS FOR FUTURE AGENDAS

Mr. Coleman asked if there were any items for future GMA # 2 agendas.

Dr. Hutchison said the next meeting agenda should focus on the updated technical report which uses Scenario 19 as the basis for the future Desired Future Condition (DFC).

He said he could prepare the technical report prior to the Feb. 18, 2021 GMA # 1 meeting. This would allow the HPWD representative to have this information for the meeting. In addition, this gives the GMA # 2 representatives a month to review this prior to possible approval.

Mr. Coleman asked Mr. Bradley for any updates relating to other GMA efforts to adopt DFCs. Mr. Bradley had nothing to report at this time.

The next GMA # 2 meeting is tentatively set for 10:00 a.m., Thursday, March 25, 2021. It is uncertain if this will be an in-person meeting or a virtual meeting. Only time will tell with the current COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr. Coleman asked for any announcements from the members.

Ms. Blount reminded the group about the virtual Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD) regular business meeting and speaker series, which takes place Jan. 26-27. She also asked the group's prayers for Bluebonnet GCD General Manager Zach Holland and his wife as they cope with their son's recent illness.

Ms. Bush also asked for prayers for Ray Brady and his family. His son's funeral service is later today.

8. ADJOURN

UWCD Llano Estacado made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:05 a.m.. UWCD Sandy Land seconded the motion. The motion was Approved.

Ayes: Garza, High Plains, Llano Estacado , Mesa, Permian Basin, Sandy Land, South Plains

Respectfully submitted,

Jason Coleman,P.E.
Administrator, GMA # 2