



Panhandle Water News

JANUARY 2015

Points of Interest

Annual Winter Level Measurements

Meter 50/50 Cost Share Ends May 1

2014 Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show

84th Texas Legislative Session

Precipitation Enhancement Update

PGCD Scholarship Reminder

PGCD Educational Presentations



Annual Winter Level Measurements

Each year Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District takes measurements on a network of 800+ wells throughout the District to determine yearly aquifer changes in water levels. The measurements are taken not only to determine the water level in the aquifer, but also to collect data, provide information for future planning and to determine IRS depletion allowances. The measurements are taken during the winter months when demands for irrigation are lower so that a more representative static water level can be obtained.

Our field technicians began water level measurements in November and will finish next month. The winter water level measurements play a critical role in gauging our compliance with the 50/50 goal, to have 50 percent of the water left



PGCD measuring tape used to measure district wells.

in the aquifer 50 years from now, by allowing us to monitor the decline of saturated thickness in the aquifer over the past year.

Knowing the amount of decline drives enforcement of study areas in places where wa-

ter levels have dropped below the allowed annual 1.25 percent of saturated thickness. When study areas go into place, the landowner is notified and water use is monitored more frequently by the District. If the decline

WLM continued on page 2

Meter 50/50 Cost Share Ends May 1

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) was recently approved for a grant from the Texas Water Development Board which allows the District to 50/50 cost share meters with District producers.

District rules state that wells drilled after December 2004 that are 4" in diameter or larger are required to have a meter placed

on the well or pivot. Also, ALL wells that are located in a study area are required to have a meter in place. Producers with wells drilled prior to 2004 in a newly designated study area eligible to receive a meter from PGCD at no cost.

There are still opportunities available to District producers to purchase a meter through PGCD.

Meters must be purchased before May 1, 2015 to take advantage of PGCD's 50/50 cost share program.

For more information about purchasing or installing a meter, please contact the District office at (806) 883-2501.



2014 Amarillo Farm and Ranch Show

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) attended the 2014 Amarillo Farm and Ranch show December 2-4 at the Amarillo Civic Center. The booth displayed District information for show attendees, such as our 2014 five year average decline maps that were published in the Panhandle Water News July 2014 newsletter, District programs, information about xeriscaping and rainwater harvesting, and other District information.

Visitors that stopped by the booth were able to sign up for a chance to win a PGCD portfolio, play a game of plinko for a chance to win a prize, receive informational brochures about the District, take home copies of this year's editions of Panhandle Water News and also be able to sign up to receive a free subscription to the Panhandle Water News.

PGCD looks forward to this event each year and enjoys getting to meet and interact with the public and the chance to educate them on the importance of water conservation whether it be at home or in the field.



General Manager C.E. Williams and Field Technician Peter Winegart in the District's booth at the Farm and Ranch Show.

Ag Loan Funds Available

Panhandle Groundwater District is accepting loan applications from District producers for center pivot sprinklers, drip irrigation systems, soil moisture probes, and other water saving equipment.

The loan is available to producers at an interest rate of 1.12 percent and an eight year payback term. Approximate funds remaining are \$1,040,383.

For more information about our ag loan program contact Julie Bennett at the District office at (806) 883-2501.

WLM Continued from page 1

levels improve it can come out of a study area, however, if decline continues to exceed the allowable limit, the study area could be designated a conservation area by the District which may result in reductions of the maximum annual production rate.

If you have questions please call the office for assistance (806) 883-2501.

The measurements taken can be viewed in our July 2015 newsletter.

84th Texas Legislative Session

The governing body of Texas greatly changed after the November 2014 election. Many new faces are present this month in the start of the 84th Texas legislative session which began on January 13, 2015.

The House of Representatives had twenty-five new representatives come into office and at least nine new committee chairs. The Senate has sworn in eight new Senators and has at least four new committee chairs. Texas has a newly elected Governor, Greg Abbott. Dan Patrick was elected Lieutenant Governor, Senator Glenn Hegar replaced Susan Combs and is sworn in as the new Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, and new Senators include Bob Hall, Brandon Creighton, Paul Bettencourt, Louis Kolkerst, Van Taylor, Konni Burton, Don Huffines and Charles Perry. The House of Representative welcomed some 25 new members.

Many issues will be discussed this year concerning the future of Texas. Of those topics, one that the state has faced for many years now is the water supply for the growing state of Texas. Issues such as Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR), brackish groundwater, and renewal of operating permits for groundwater districts are some of the topics being discussed this session.

ASR and brackish groundwater will be the hot topics of discussion. ASR and brackish groundwater are alternative water conservation strategies that could assist in securing Texas' water supply if approved. ASR is currently being practiced in a few areas of the state; officials will look into adopting this practice and make ASR more widespread across the state of Texas. The exploration of brackish groundwater and promotion of it will also be a primary topic of discussion.

"The 84th Session of the Texas Legislature will be another interesting water session," predicts C. E. Williams, General Manager Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District.



Precipitation Enhancement Update

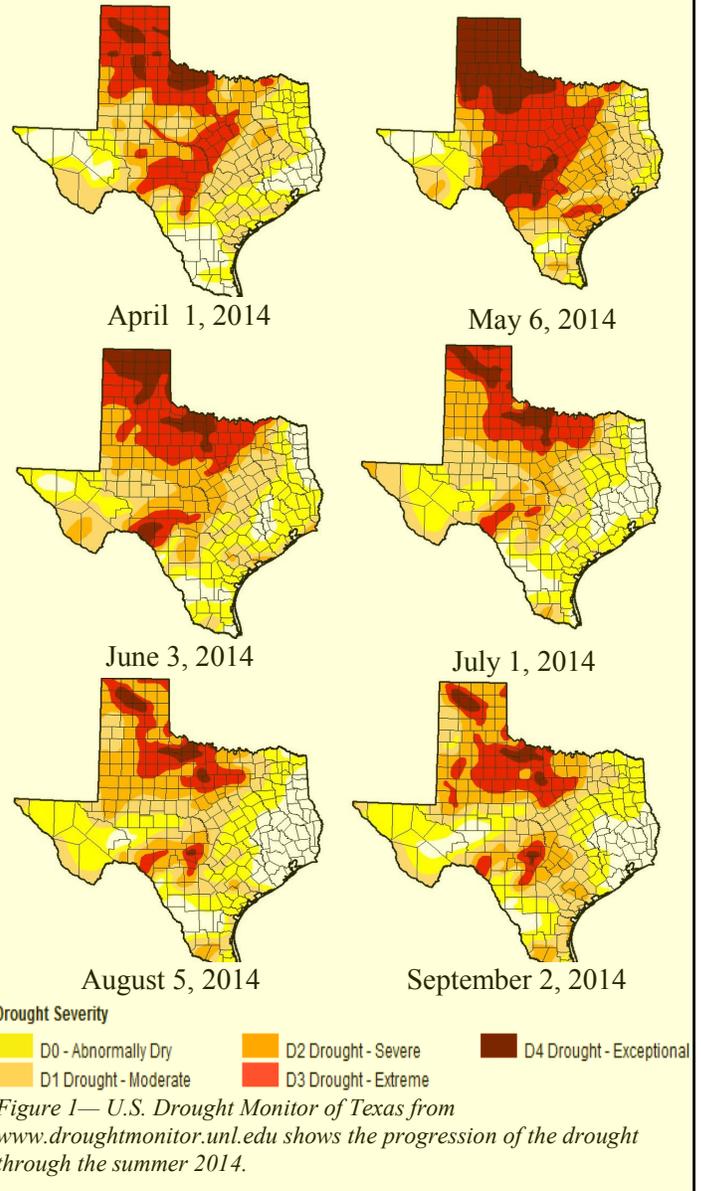
The conclusion of the 2014 Precipitation Enhancement Program marked the fifteenth year for Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District’s program. The 2014 season began on April 20 and ended on September 24. This year’s season started off with most of the Panhandle in an extreme to exceptional drought in April and May. According to the National Weather Service, many places in the Panhandle and surrounding areas were on a 43 month driest record from October 2010 to April 2014. On Memorial Day weekend the area saw a transition as an upper level storm system brought much needed rain with some areas receiving several months worth of rain at one time. Amarillo received 3.55 inches and White Deer received 3.16 inches from May 21-26. After Memorial Day, the rainfall was considered more normal; however, most of the Panhandle was still characterized by at least moderate drought through the summer into September with some areas to the northwest remaining in the extreme to exceptional categories. Figure 1 shows the U.S. drought monitor from April to September 2014.

Last year’s seeding season was considered very successful, providing on average an eight percent increase in rainfall per county according to Active Influence and Scientific Management. This increase calculates out to an average of 1.36 inches of additional rainfall per county with the PGCD target area. Active Influence and Scientific Management analyzed a total of 37 clouds in 17 operational days. The results were evaluated as excellent with timing of seeding at 94 percent. After considering additional rainfall, crop values and district acreage the cost of the program for 2014 was \$0.05 per acre. Table 1 below gives summer rainfall information for 2012-2014, and table 2 shows some of the monthly information during the 2014 program operations.

April-September Rainfall Averages
Comparing 2012-2014 in Inches

	2012	2013	Diff	2014	Diff
Armstrong	12.62	16.31	3.69	17.36	1.05
Carson	11.74	16.49	4.75	20.47	3.98
Donley	14.78	16.67	1.89	19.96	3.29
Gray	15.68	20.28	4.60	15.19	5.09
Potter	10.42	9.86	0.56	17.63	7.67
Roberts	12.21	17.22	5.01	17.25	0.03
Wheeler	16.68	20.49	3.81	15.10	5.39

U.S. Drought Monitor Texas



	Days	Seed Flights	Recon Flights	Flight Hours
April	1	2	1	7
May	4	7	3	15
June	4	4	4	11
July	6	9	3	21
August	14	11	12	35
September	2	1	3	6
Totals	31	34	26	95

Table 2 shows the number of days flown, seeding flights, reconnaissance flights, and hours flown per month through the 2014 season. Table 1 (right) shows the comparison of rainfall from 2012-2014 during April-September in PGCD. Blue indicated positive change and red indicates negative change.

DISTRICT OFFICE
201 W. Third St, PO Box 637
White Deer, TX 79097
Phone: 806/883-2501
FAX: 806/883-2162
Web Page: www.pgcd.us

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
John R. Spearman, Jr., President
Danny Hardcastle, V-President
Chancy Cruse, Secretary
Charles Bowers, Director
Phillip Smith, Director
Jim Thompson, Director
Billy Van Crawford, Director
F. G. "Butch" Collard, Director
Bill Breeding, Director

C. E. Williams, General Manager
E-Mail: cew@pgcd.us

Panhandle Water News is published quarterly. Subscriptions are free, upon request.

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**Presorted
Standard
US Postage
PAID
Amarillo, TX
Permit No. 227**

PGCD Scholarship Reminder

Panhandle Groundwater Conservation District (PGCD) offers a scholarship to all high school graduating seniors within the District (Armstrong, Carson, Donley, Gray, Potter, Roberts and Wheeler counties) that are planning to further their education. Tuition costs are high and scholarships can tremendously help in reducing down these costs, so take advantage of the PGCD scholarship program and apply.

PGCD established a scholarship program in 2002 and has since given away \$108,000 to District students. First place is awarded a four year scholarship of \$4,000, second place receives \$3,000 and \$2,000 goes to third place. Only graduating seniors from the District are eligible to apply. Applicants must write a 500-1,000 word essay on the topic chosen by the District. In order to receive the scholarship, recipients are required to enroll as a full-time student, attend the college of their choice the fall semester immediately following selection and maintain at least a 2.5 grade point average.

The 2014/2015 essay topic is:

“Due to continuing drought conditions in many parts of the state and a growing population, Texas is considering

alternative water sources such as Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR) and use of Brackish Groundwater. In your opinion, what would the advantages and disadvantages be to the use of ASR and Brackish Groundwater?”

The deadline for the application is Friday, February 13. Applications and additional information can be found online at the Amarillo Area Foundation’s website: www.amarilloareafoundation.org.

PGCD Educational Presentations

There is still plenty of time to get a water conservation presentation scheduled for your students. Our presentation is directed towards District 5th graders and is an excellent learning experience for students. Students will learn about where there water comes from, the water cycle, aquifers, playa lakes, water facts, and how the aquifer works. The presentation is a great teaching tool and refresher for the STAAR Test.

The District also offers informational presentations about the District to local civic groups. For more information about our presentations or to get a presentation scheduled please contact Korri Packard at the PGCD office at (806) 883-2501 or by email at pgcd_education@yahoo.com or kpackard@pgcd.us.