

Recharge

Your Groundwater Resource



Fall 2022
Volume 12 Issue 3

THIS YEAR'S GROUNDWATER SUMMIT BIG SUCCESS

This year's 2022 Milam and Burleson Counties Groundwater Summit was a great success. Over 250 local landowners and concerned citizens enjoyed over twenty speakers, lunch and some great question and answer sessions at the Caldwell Civic Center at 103 W Hwy 21, Caldwell, Texas.

After a welcome from Milam County Judge, Steve Young, the first panel explained how the Region G water planning ties into the state water plan. It included Wayne Wilson, Brazos Region G planning group, Sarah Backhouse Lee who oversees the State's Regional State Water Planning Program, Gary Westbrook, POSGCD's General Manager and Tony Smith, a Water Resource Engineer. The second panel discussed Aquifer sustainability and what that means. This group included Robert Mace from the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, Vanessa Puig-Williams, Environmental Defense fund and Carlos Rubinstein, who was Chairman of the Texas Water Development Board and now works for an environmental consulting firm - RSAH2O, LLC.



Over 250 attendees at this year's Groundwater Summit in Caldwell.

The third panel of the day included Sarah Kinkle, the Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the Texas Water Conservation Association, Robby Cook, who is a former Texas House Representative and now is a consultant with Eichler and Cook, LLC and Leah Martinsson, the Executive Director of the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts and the year's Master of Ceremonies. They discussed the legislative process and how it affects our groundwater district. It was a great opportunity for people to come and learn about the state's requirements on local groundwater management and stay up-to-date on current groundwater issues, such as property rights and groundwater management. Our State law provides that landowners in Texas own the groundwater under their land, while the State owns and regulates the surface water in Texas. All three panelists also discussed the many ways POSGCD participates in these processes, with the District General Manager serving on several important committees in each organization.



Judge Schroeder thanks attendees.

POSGCD recognized Directors Lee Alford and Sidney Youngblood for their years of service to the District. After lunch, Burleson County Judge Keith Schroeder thanked everyone for being at the event to learn more about the groundwater in our counties. Ward Roddam, POSGCD's newly elected Board President and General Manager Gary Westbrook shared the State of the District. There was an update on the popular Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP), the Aquifer Conservancy Program (ACP) and information on Compliance with DFCs and POSGCD's well monitoring system.

The last two programs of the Summit featured our partnership with the Texas A&M AgriLife with speakers John Smith and Ryan Gerlich. Ryan had a very practical program about septic systems. He explained the different types of systems and he showed how to properly maintain your septic system. John Smith shared information about water quality, how you can find out information about your well, how to find well drillers, information about our aquifers and he shared the results of the water testing program we offered to landowners in the District.

The District invites citizens of Milam and Burleson Counties, as well as surrounding areas to attend the Groundwater Summit each year.



Ward Roddam -State of the District program

Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District organizes this event and invites groundwater experts from across Texas to come speak at the local level. It is a great opportunity for people to come and learn about the state's requirements on local groundwater management and to stay up-to-date on current groundwater issues, such as property rights and groundwater management. If you missed this year's Summit, the videos from each speaker or panel are on our website for your enjoyment at: www.posgcd.org/groundwater-summit/. If you have any questions, please visit our website or call our offices at 512-455-9900.

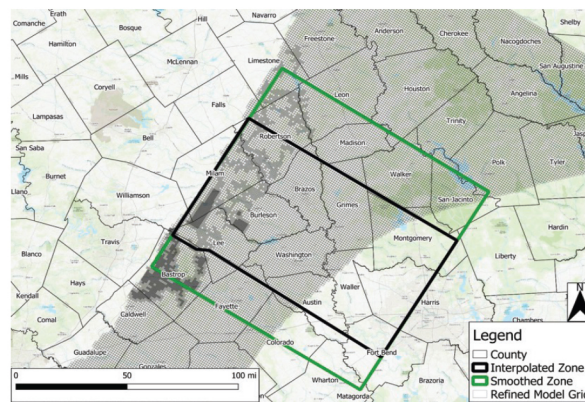


Ryan Gerlich tells Best Septic Practices.

Post Oak Savannah Receives \$200,000 Grant Award for New Groundwater Modeling Software

Post Oak Savannah GCD was awarded a \$200,000 grant in federal assistance from the Bureau of Reclamation to improve groundwater modeling capabilities in our local area that will be a significant tool in supporting management decisions. Currently, the District uses a Groundwater Availability Model (GAM) of the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer developed by the Texas Water Development Board covering a study area of all or parts of 46 counties. The current model was developed for and intended to be used as a regional water planning tool in the overall state water plan. The current GAM was updated 5 years ago, for the first time since its release in 2004. The District contributed to the last update and it has served as a valuable tool, but there's a need for a more detailed model in the current management conditions. The current GAM is not equipped or detailed enough to be used in local, smaller scale management decisions. This new grant will be used in collaboration with the Meadows Center for Water and the Environment at Texas State University to develop a new model. The Operational Management Model, OPMAN, will be developed using significantly more data from our counties so that it can better simulate local hydrogeologic conditions within the 14-county area recognized as Groundwater Management Area 12, and even more specifically, Burleson and Milam counties. This will allow the District to have a more focused picture of the aquifers as a whole with the capability of assessing smaller-scale management scenarios in more detail than ever before. This detailed and more accurate data set will provide better estimates of risks and impacts of groundwater pumping/recharge to make more reliable (and quantifiable) management decisions, to better enforce our rules to prevent over production, and to protect the local water supplies for the long term. The District will contribute an additional \$350,000 to combine with the \$200,000 grant to develop this new modeling software. Updates about this project can be found by visiting our website:

www.posgcd.org/category/press-releases/



District Manager Testifies before the House Natural Resources Committee

Natural Resources Committee

Committee Members



Gary Westbrook Testifies at Capital

On August 24, 2022, POSGCD General Manager Gary Westbrook was invited to testify before the Texas House Natural Resources Committee on one of the interim charges assigned to the committee earlier this year by the Speaker of the House. Gary was one of several individuals invited by the committee to testify on the topic "Groundwater Issues: Review of large-scale water transfers and their impact on groundwater resources." Several witnesses spoke on these issues preceding Gary. Those individuals were John Dupnik, Deputy Executive Administrator, Office of Water Science and Conservation, Texas Water Development Board, who provided legislators with an overview of how the Groundwater Management Area/Desired Future Conditions process is designed to work. Next, Robert Puente, President of San Antonio Water Systems (SAWS) provided an overview of the Vista Ridge Project and how SAWS developed that project. Following Puente was Dr. Robert Mace, Deputy Executive Director, The Meadows Center for Water and the Environment, who provided a discussion of the current situation of depressurization in the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer in the vicinity of the Vista Ridge Project.

Gary then provided a brief history of Post Oak Savannah GCD, including permitting rules and structure of the District, as well a general discussion of the District's efforts in establishing protective limits for impacts to aquifers and groundwater management, and how the District respects the rights of landowners who wish to produce water as well as those who wish to leave their property in groundwater in place. Gary provided a summary of the permitting and regulation for the Vista Ridge project, going all the way back to 2004 when the first permits were issued, and updating that information to the present day, as well as the vast amounts of information the District uses to evaluate impacts of the project. Gary stated, "The pumping for the Vista Ridge project has been included in considerations for each of the last two rounds of joint planning for GMA 12. At this time the impacts from Vista Ridge production have not led to actions of curtailment in order to prevent exceedance of DFCs or District goals." He also noted, "The impacts observed in and near the Vista Ridge project are the results of the reduction of pressure in the Carrizo Aquifer, and the aquifer itself remains saturated beneath the property of

the affected well owners. The challenge faced by many landowners is to lower pumps to account for a reduction in pressure to be able to access their water."

Gary discussed advances by the District in science and understanding of impacts in aquifers, which included expending more than \$350,000 on improvements to the State's groundwater availability model, and measuring water levels in over 400 monitor wells by District staff. He also discussed development of important District Programs such as the Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP) which has serviced 97 wells to date due to these impacts, and the Aquifer Conservancy Program (ACP) which is designed to compensate landowners who commit property to conserving groundwater. The ACP recently exceeded 1,000 parcels and 50,000 acres enrolled. He provided the most recent updates on these items to the committee.

Before answering several questions from the committee, Gary closed with two important observations: "First, if development of the finite resource of groundwater from the State's aquifers is the answer to the State's water needs, then there are going to be impacts to water levels in water wells. Much of this water will be transported from rural Texas to urban centers, and from aquifers under confined conditions. You have heard Dr. Mace's testimony. Impacts are unavoidable, and sooner or later will lead to consequences which must be dealt with.

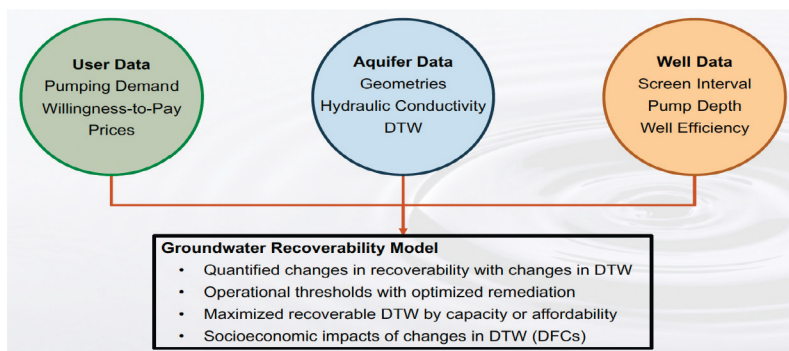
Second, in my opinion, currently Texas continues to support strategies which lead to segregation of surface water projects and groundwater projects. This often leads to competition between the two sources with more consideration given to cost of water delivered rather than development of strategies which conjunctively use both sources. Conjunctive use strategies should be incentivized in order for both sources to complement each other. If we miss this opportunity while there is enough of both sources, we will risk assurance of water availability in the future." Testimony for this hearing can be found at <https://house.texas.gov/video-audio/committee-broadcasts/>

POSGCD Board to Participate in Innovative Program with the Bureau of Economic Geology

At its September 13, 2022 Board Meeting, the Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District (POSGCD) Board voted to participate with the Bureau of Economic Geology (BEG) in a pilot program that will help to better understand and quantify the hydrologic and socioeconomic impacts to pumping driven by groundwater storage and use conditions. The Board received a presentation from Dr. Justin Thompson from the BEG, where Dr. Thompson requested the District's participation in the innovative program which will create a user-friendly tool for performing evaluations. Participation does not require any District funding to the BEG, but does require an investment of time and attention by District personnel in completion of the work.

This program will be the first of its kind and will be useful across the State. This program combines user data, which includes pumping demands and cost to mitigate any issues to current wells, aquifer data, including Hydraulic Conductivity of the aquifer and other geometries, and well data, which includes screen interval, pump depth and well efficiency.

Participation in development of this new tool will give the District information on quantified changes in recoverability and operational thresholds with optimized remediation and socioeconomic impacts of changes with the Desired Future Conditions.



POSGCD Purchases Land to Build New Office and Education Center



Our team at POSGCD is excited to share the news that we are building a new office and Education Center! This new facility will be located just around the corner from our current location to provide easy access for everyone. We will have an expanded education center with interactive exhibits and displays, a larger theater space for Board Meetings, a demonstration garden and expanded office space. As we continue to grow in both staff and responsibilities, we need more room. In addition as the number of new



grant programs, monitoring wells, and education opportunities increases, we need a larger facility to serve our citizens better. We are looking to provide our citizens with the service they deserve in a more comfortable setting. POSGCD's mission is to adopt and enforce Rules consistent with State laws and based on the best available science, which provide for the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging and prevention of waste of groundwater, while supporting the ownership of groundwater and the owner's right to assign or produce that property. We'll keep you updated as our new building plans develop.

Sidney Youngblood - Retires

Sidney Youngblood is retiring from the POSGCD Board. Sidney was appointed by the Milam County Commissioner's Court in 2013 to represent Industrial Interests in the county in 2013. In 2016 he was elected Board President and has served in that capacity since. Sidney represented the industrial interests for Milam County.

Dana McClaren - Retires

Dana McClaren is retiring from the Board Member. She was representing agricultural interests for Milam County. Dana served for two years and was a great addition to the POSGCD Board with her knowledge of groundwater, agriculture, and legal issues. She served on the Rules Committee and the Building Committee. Kit Worley replaces Dana as the Agricultural Member of the POSGCD Board for Milam County.

Kit Worley- New Director

Kit Worley lives in the San Gabriel area where he operates a family farm that has been in his family for generations. He also comes to the Board with years of experience in the water industry as he is a long time board member and current Board President of Southwest Milam Water Supply Corporation in Rockdale.

Kelli Timmerman - New Staff Member

Kelli Timmerman has 15 years of experience in accounting and bookkeeping in various industries, including nine years with municipal water/wastewater departments. She was raised in Rockdale where she attended Rockdale High School, Blinn College and Temple College. She was employed with the City of Rockdale and Round Rock in the Water/Wastewater Maintenance departments. Kelli was also a Bookkeeper for Butler Weldments in Cameron and KJZT Family Life in Austin. Her skills in QuickBooks and Microsoft programs will be a perfect fit at Post Oak Savannah GCD. Her passion for Customer Service and detail-oriented personality will be appreciated by the landowners and everyone she works with at POSGCD.

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & WORKSHOPS

Rainwater Harvesting November 2, 2022 9:00 am-12:00pm

Rainwater Harvesting February 7, 2023 5:30 pm-8:30 pm

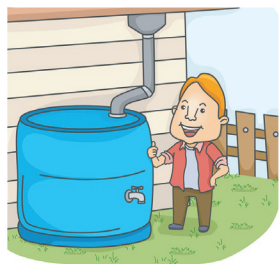
Rainwater Harvesting April 21, 2023 1:00 pm-4:00 pm

EarthKind Landscapes March 10, 2023 9:00 am - 11:00 am

Landscape Irrigation May 11, 2023 Time TBA

Program updates, information, and registration links can be found by visiting: posgcd.org/rainwater

Contact Jaclyn Robertson with questions, (512) 409-7028 and jrobertson@posgcd.org.



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POSGCD SOCIAL:



@PostOakSavannahGCD



@posgcd



Let's chat!

Phone: 512.455.9900

Email: admin@posgcd.org

Visit our website for more information:

www.posgcd.org

This issue and past issues of the Newsletter are available on our website.

upcoming events

November 2nd, 2022 9:00-12:00 pm

Rainwater Harvesting class POSGCD office

February 7th, 2023 5:30pm -8:30pm

Rainwater Harvesting class POSGCD office

February 23rd 1:00 pm -4:00 pm

Rainwater Harvesting class POSGCD office

March 10th 9:00 am -11:00 am

EarthKind Landscapes class POSGCD office

May 11th Time TBA

Landscape Irrigation class POSGCD office

**Our Board Meetings are the
Second Tuesday of each month**

Groundwater conservation districts are the state's preferred method of groundwater management through rules developed, adopted and promulgated by a district.

Texas Water Code, Sec. 36.0015



POSGCD was created to conserve and regulate the use of groundwater through monitoring of aquifer levels and production and encourage conservation rules which limit pumping, thereby extending the quantity and quality of the water available in all of the aquifers in Milam and Burleson counties. POSGCD is a member of the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD).



Ward Roddam, President

Jay Wilder, Vice President

Tommy Tietjen, Sec/Treas

Becky Goetsch

John Redington

Steven Wise

Bob Wilson

Ed Savage

Buster Evers

Kit Worley

Staff

Gary Westbrook, General Manager

Courtney Gentry, Administrative Assistant

Kelli Timmerman, Office Manager

Bobby Bazan, Water Resource Specialist

Michael Redman, Regulatory Compliance Specialist

Craig Andrews, Field Technician

Jeff Fisher, Field Technician

Doug Box, Education Coordinator

Are we providing information you need?

The district staff wants to know what information you would like to see in this newsletter. Please contact us at 512.455.9900 or admin@posgcd.org to let us know how we can better serve you.