



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**GROUNDWATER SUMMIT ADDRESSES POPULATION GROWTH AND REGULATORY CHALLENGES SHAPING THE FUTURE OF GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT**

MILANO, TX— The Burlison and Milam County Annual Groundwater Summit, held on July 18, 2024, in Caldwell, Texas, gathered community members, staff, and experts to discuss key groundwater management challenges and impacts on the District.

Tony Smith of Carollo Engineers kicked off the Summit with the “State of Water in Texas: Trends and Future Outlooks” by offering a big-picture view of the state water planning process and a breakdown of the impacts of growth on local communities in the District. He emphasized that planning is a stakeholder-driven process that happens every five years and steps of the regional planning process

Panel Discussion on Property Rights vs. Regulation was moderated by John Dupnik of the Texas Water Development Board. The panel of general managers from Groundwater Management Area (GMA) 12 and Billy Howell from the Texas Farm Bureau Federation discussed the challenges of balancing property rights with regulation under the Rule of Capture, especially with population growth and water export projects. The session included a brief history of groundwater conservation districts (GCDs) and focused on how different districts' Rules and management plans balance the protection of private property rights and the right to produce or pump.

Five-Year Review Presentation was delivered by Michael Redman, Regulatory Compliance Specialist. He presented “District 5-Year Review: Effect on Permittees,” explaining that starting in January 2025, the review will assess 726 of the 964 permits. While permits are issued for 40 years, this new review will determine if permitted water production needs adjustments made to meet the management goals without altering the District's established Protective Drawdown Limits (PDLs) and the regionally established Desired Future Conditions (DFCs). Exempt wells, such as those for domestic and livestock use, and alluvial wells, which are shallow and easily impacted by rainfall trends. The review process will include public comments and scientific findings, with final permit renewals expected by January 2026.

State of the District Presentation was given by John Redington, Vice-President of the Board of Directors, who provided an update on the District’s current state. He highlighted staff experience, compliance with training requirements, the 2024 budget, and successful grant programs benefiting local landowners and communities. Redington also introduced the Water Level Viewer, a new tool for public access to data that

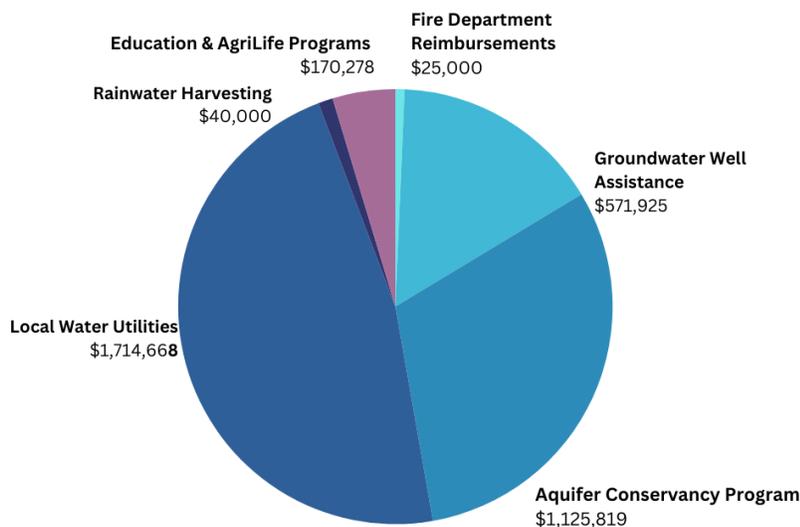
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*At Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District we aim to secure water for future generations through data collection, mentoring, regulation, and public education, in alignment with the Texas Water Code’s preference for groundwater conservation districts. Learn more at: [www.posgcd.org](http://www.posgcd.org).*

allows users to track water level trends across multiple wells. This tool is for transparency and increased public access but will not be used as a management tool.

Legislative Update: Recent Developments and Future Directions Panel was led by Sarah Kinkle, Director of Policy and Legislative Affairs for the Texas Water Conservation Association (TWCA). She and Robby Cook, former representative and legislative consultant, discussed the current legislative landscape affecting groundwater management, including recent federal legislation, Supreme Court rulings, and the high turnover rate in the legislature. They highlighted upcoming legislative focuses, such as water system reliability, clean water access, water reuse, and data-driven groundwater infrastructure. Panelists, also including Gary Westbrook and Adam Foster, emphasized the importance of engaging with the Capitol and the role of GCDs and organizations like the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts (TAGD) and TWCA in the legislative process.

Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP) and Monitoring Network Update were also covered. The GWAP assists well owners in Burleson and Milam Counties experiencing or at risk of losing service due to declining water levels. It provides financial and technical assistance funded by fees from commercial water producers and exporters. To date, over \$1.4 million has been allocated to assist 140 wells. The Monitoring Network includes 445 wells across various aquifers to improve data accuracy.



Program Progress and Updates provided a quick overview of the various POSGCD initiatives supporting local communities and conserving groundwater. The District is looking to improve grant programs and is currently reviewing the Fire Department Reimbursement grant, the Groundwater Conservation Grant for Local Water Utilities, the Aquifer Conservancy Program, and the Groundwater Well Assistance Program.

The District extends heartfelt thanks to all who shared their day attending the Summit. All presentation slideshows will be available on the website, and the video recordings will be uploaded in the coming weeks as they are processed.