

Draft Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP) Handbook



Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District
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Introduction

The mission of the Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District (POSGCD) is to provide for the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of groundwater, and to protect groundwater users, by adopting and enforcing rules consistent with state law. The District accomplishes this mission by developing and enforcing rules to manage groundwater production and by participating in joint planning with adjacent and nearby districts to manage groundwater conditions across Groundwater Management Area (GMA) 12 and GMA 8.

Among the important considerations in managing groundwater in POSGCD are statutory requirements in the Texas Water Code (TWC) that require a balance between groundwater production and protection. TWC Section 36.0015 (b) states that one purpose of a groundwater conservation district (GCD) is “to protect property rights, balance the conservation and development of groundwater to meet the needs of the state, and use the best available science in the conservation and development of groundwater.” In addition, TWC Section 36.108 (d) (d2) states that the desired future conditions (DFC) development through the joint planning process for districts “must provide a balance between the highest practicable level of groundwater production and the conservation, preservation, protection, recharging, and prevention of waste of groundwater and the control of subsidence in the management area.”

A potential consequence associated with providing for the highest practicable level of groundwater production and respecting groundwater as a property right is that groundwater pumping may cause water level declines that adversely impact the production capacity of some wells. In order to help well owners whose wells have experienced a reduction in their production capacity as a result of groundwater production in GMA 12, POSGCD has established the Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP).

The GWAP will be a part of the grant program currently operated by POSGCD. During years when its revenues are sufficient, POSGCD has funded groundwater management activities that involve the public. The grant program has operated for more than a decade and is funded by fees paid by permittees. Examples of activities that have been funded by the POSGCD grant program are: (1) sponsoring attendance of students and/or teachers at seminars related to groundwater; (2) plugging of abandoned water wells; (3) reimbursing the costs of water-saving foams used by fire departments that use groundwater; and (4) providing financial assistance to local water utilities for conservation of groundwater. The GWAP shall be funded as a separate line item in the District budget, and shall be fully funded to accomplish the purpose of the program as outlined in this manual.

Purpose

The purpose of the GWAP is to provide assistance to well owners in the District who own a well that has experienced significant adverse impacts from groundwater level declines caused by aquifer-wide groundwater pumping in Groundwater Management Area 12.

Objective

Primary objectives of the GWAP are to help restore a water supply to a well owner whose well production capacity is significantly impaired as a result of declines in aquifer pressure heads, and/or water level declines in unconfined areas, caused by aquifer-wide pumping, as well as to identify wells up to 10 years in advance which may be at risk of these impacts and provide assistance in preventing the loss of water supply. Actions supported by the GWAP to an affected well owner could entail, but is not limited to, lowering a pump in a well, modifying the construction of an existing well, drilling a new well, or providing a connection to a local water supply corporation or municipal water supply.

A secondary objective of the GWAP is to improve the POSGCD monitoring program and the POSGCD's understanding of groundwater aquifer systems in POSGCD by increasing the number of monitoring wells in the monitoring well network and by performing localized hydrogeological studies at these monitoring locations.

Overview of the Groundwater Well Assistance Program

The GWAP involves POSGCD performing hydrogeological evaluations at a well. All necessary evaluations must be completed for a well owner to be awarded funding. The initial, or Tier 1, evaluation requires only water level measurements. These water level measurements will be taken at least annually and will be used to determine if a Tier 2 evaluation is warranted. A Tier 2 evaluation requires additional field data collection and an analysis of hydrogeological data in the vicinity of the well. A Tier 3 evaluation determines the amount and type of assistance that will be awarded to the well owner. Because most of the pumping and the greatest drawdown in the District are anticipated to occur in the Simsboro and Carrizo Aquifers, the District expects that wells completed in the Carrizo-Wilcox formations will receive the majority of the Groundwater Well Assistance Fund.

Eligibility Requirements for Assistance from the Groundwater Well Assistance Program

To be eligible for assistance in the GWAP, a well must be located in Milam or Burleson counties, be registered with the District, and be part of the monitoring well network (see POSGCD website for instructions to join). The well also must be either a low-capacity non-exempt permitted well that produces less than 50 gallons per minute OR an exempt well used for domestic and/or livestock use as defined in the District's Rules, and may not be covered by a mitigation agreement included in a permit issued by the District or required by the State of Texas.

Groundwater Well Assistance Program Contact Information

The POSGCD Water Resource Management Specialist will be the primary point of contact for the well owners. The Water Resource Management Specialist contact information for the GWAP is listed below:

Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District
Water Resource Management Specialist: Mr. Bobby Bazan

310 East Avenue C

Milano, Texas 76556

Phone: 512.455.9900

Toll-free: 800.231.8196

Fax: 512.455.9909

Email: bbazan@posgcd.org

Administration of the Groundwater Well Assistance Program

The GWAP will be administered by the General Manager, working in coordination with the Water Resource Management Specialist and the District's hydrogeologist. The primary responsibility of the Water Resource Management Specialist is to verify eligibility and oversee the investigation and evaluation of any application. The Water Resource Management Specialist will then consult with the District's hydrogeologist and recommend to the General Manager a course of action for providing assistance to a well owner. In most circumstances, the General Manager, after consideration of information from Tier 1 and Tier 2 evaluations, will be responsible for overseeing the Tier 3 evaluation and determining the amount, terms, and conditions, of financial assistance to a well owner from POSGCD to implement a specific corrective action plan. This recommendation will occur after the completion of a Tier 2 well evaluation.

Additional details and specifics for actions conducted by the District to implement the GWAP can be found in the GWAP Procedure Manual.



**Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District
Well Assistance Request Form**

Date: _____

Name of Well Owner: _____

Address of Well Owner: _____

Phone Number: _____

Well Location: _____

Driller Log Available (y/n): _____

Date Drilled: _____

Well Depth: _____

Well Screen Information: _____

Aquifer: _____