

Dear Friends of Post Oak Savannah Groundwater Conservation District,

As we reflect on the challenges of 2020, it is with sincere hope that I pray each of you enjoyed a much-needed Holiday Season with as much peace and joy as possible. As our Board and Staff continue to strive to serve the citizens of Milam and Burleson Counties, we realize it is only with the support of our constituents in these two counties that we are able to succeed in our efforts to fulfil our mission statement. It is with recognition and gratitude of this support we review this past year's accomplishments, and plan for future successes in the management of groundwater resources of the District.

As with any organization we have experienced change. During this past year we have seen the retirement of two Board members and one employee. Mr. Durwood Tucker, Milam County Agricultural Interests, and Mr. Chris Whittaker, Milam County Municipal Interests, have both moved on to other endeavours and we wish them the best in all they do. These positions have been capably filled by our Milam County Commissioner's Court with Mrs. Dana McClaren and Mr. Ward Roddam, respectively. Both have worked diligently to get "up to speed" with District issues and will be exceptional additions to our Board. Mr. Ralph Sifuentes, serving as the District's Field Technician, served our citizens well for three years as he helped expand the District's Well Monitoring Network and establish high standards for performance. Depending on experienced persons to fill such an important position, Mr. Craig Andrews began work to fill that position December 1.

We realize that we continue to benefit from the input and interaction of our citizens in our efforts. Who would have thought that one year ago, we would be dependent upon technology to replace face to face meetings? It is in this new world that we continue to find new ways to be inclusive and respectful of those who desire to participate, even if we are currently only able to do so in a virtual platform. As we continue to develop new programs and advance current programs, we continue to strive to pioneer new ways to be inclusive of interaction with the public in this "new normal", and we look forward to a time in the near future when we can resume in person meetings.

Our commitment is as strong as ever to continue to provide the highest level of service to the citizens of our District as we carry out our mission of conserving and preserving the groundwater resources in our area while respecting the property rights in groundwater of all landowners.

With the support of the Board of Directors, and through dedication of our qualified staff, achievements of the District during 2020 are many. Among new accomplishments was efforts under our Groundwater Well Assistance Program (GWAP). GWAP was created to assist well owners whose wells lost service ability due to regional groundwater production. During 2020, District staff evaluated 47 wells, and rendered assistance in restoring water service in 23 of those situations, with funds from the GWAP funding 100% of the work for a total of \$84,904. This important service to our citizens will continue. Maybe among the most overlooked accomplishments is the fact that staff and Board adjusted to the necessities and requirements of COVID protocols designed to protect the public and kept the District office open and accessible to the public with no lapse in service. This included much planning and teamwork and has proven to set a standard of excellence.

Another notable accomplishment includes completion of the second year of enrolment of the innovative and popular Aquifer Conservancy Program. Through cooperation of many well owners, the coverage and monitoring of water levels in aquifers in the District increased as well. And of course, the District's grant programs continue to set new standards for conservation and education.

Here are some important statistics:

Aquifer Conservancy Program

- Now over 600 parcels of property, including over 45,000 acres covering both Milam and Burleson Counties are enrolled.
- More than 75% of the acreage enrolled is committed for 20 years

Monitoring Well Summary

- 292 monitor wells, increased from 241, covering 8 aquifers in the District
- 31 monitor wells equipped with transducers to record continuous hourly measurements
- 27 monitor wells, increased from 10, equipped with acoustic devices providing real time reporting
- 11 monitor wells, increased from 8, from converted abandoned oil and gas wells in strategic areas
- 8 monitor wells drilled by the District in strategically located places
- All water level monitoring information available to the public through access of the District's website
- Identification of areas of interest for future monitoring well locations

Groundwater Conservation Grants

- 1 Million awarded through 6 grants during 2020 to public water utilities in both counties, bringing the total since 2006 to \$14.3 million awarded for conservation
- \$5,942 awarded to local volunteer fire departments for water conservation materials and nozzles
- \$13,475 awarded to plug abandoned water wells
- 10 Rainwater Harvesting systems installed consisting of 15 cisterns with a total of 84,560 gallons of storage

Education Efforts

- Cooperative Conservation classes through Texas A&M AgriLife with 5 workshops serving 138 with classes on rainwater harvesting, EarthKind, and irrigation with collected rainwater
- Cooperative Water Quality Testing for more than 100 privately owned water wells

- Supported state-wide Texas A&M AgriLife 4-H Water Ambassadors program educating 66 high students on water issues across the state

The website remains a big part of our outreach to citizens and landowners. In 2020 our website enjoyed a total of 27,913 page views during 10,578 sessions from 9251 visitors. This yields an average daily page view count of 76.3, with an average of 253 visitors per day.

The POSGCD Twitter account receives an average of 54 views per day with 376 followers, with Facebook posts averaging 22 views and 100% retention.

Understanding the importance of public involvement in all we do, our Board and Staff continue to encourage public involvement of our citizens in our all of our efforts. This may mean participation virtually, and when possible, in person. No matter the method, your participation in committee meetings, Board meetings, workshops, educational opportunities and hopefully this year the resuming of our annual Milam and Burleson Counties Groundwater Summit continues to prove invaluable.

As always, our capable staff stands ready to assist your organization with educational opportunities on groundwater or conservation-based presentations that can be tailored to topics that best help meet the needs of all kinds of groups, no matter the size or orientation. We thank you in advance for your continued support of our programs of conservation of these precious resources, and for your continued efforts to advance these worthwhile causes by encouraging your family, friends and neighbours to join with us as well.

We also encourage you to take advantage of the many opportunities to communicate your feedback to us on your experiences with our District and its programs. Please feel free to call, email, text, or interact with us virtually, or of course you are always invited to simply drop by the office.

Again, on behalf of our Board and staff, we thank everyone for their efforts to make 2020 such a great year! We stand prepared to work with you to support the District's missions as we strive to achieve even greater progress in 2021.

Sincerely,

Sidney Youngblood
Board President
Post Oak Savannah GCD