



Texas Alliance Of
Groundwater Districts

GCDs and Brackish Groundwater Permitting

Stacey Allison–Steinbach

Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts

Texas Desal 2014

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Current Management

83rd Legislature Recap

Current Efforts



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GCDs and Brackish Groundwater

- Rules to encourage brackish groundwater production may address:
 - Well construction standards and spacing
 - Monitoring requirements
 - DFCs and production limits
- Management zones: 36.116(d)



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GCDs with Brackish Rules

- Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer CD
- Evergreen UWCD
- Plum Creek CD
- Gonzales County UWCD
- Pecan Valley GCD
- Plateau UWC and SD

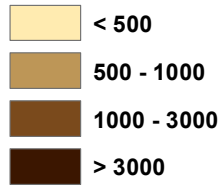


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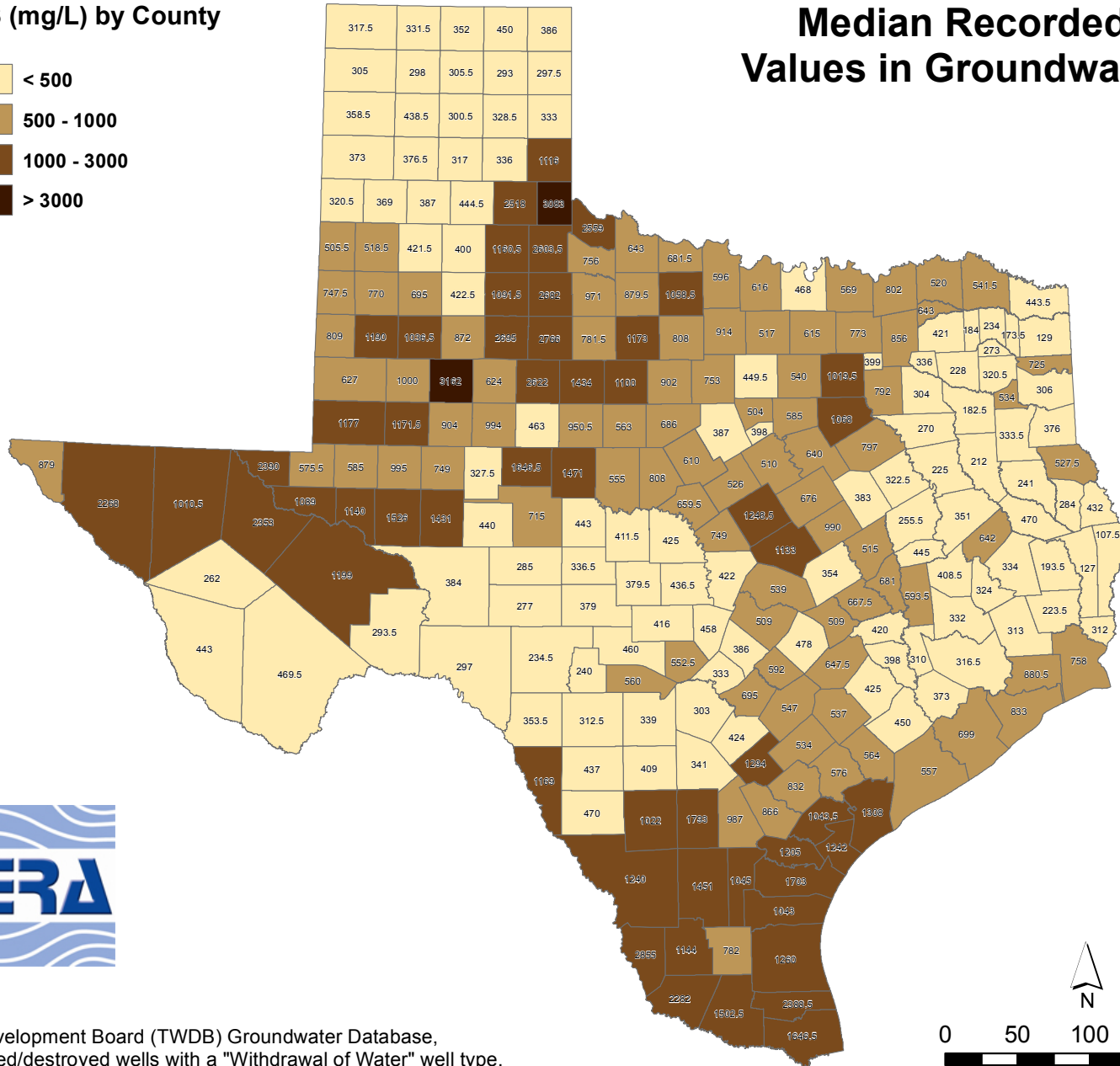
No One-Size-Fits-All

- Brackish rules are dependent on the local aquifer conditions
 - “Separation” of fresh and brackish water
 - Most or all of the water in the GCD might be considered “brackish”
- Other GCDs are studying brackish aquifers and will have rules soon

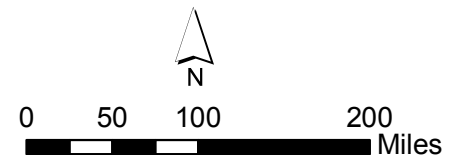
Median TDS (mg/L) by County



Median Recorded TDS Values in Groundwater Wells



Data Source:
 Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Groundwater Database,
 using non-plugged/destroyed wells with a "Withdrawal of Water" well type.





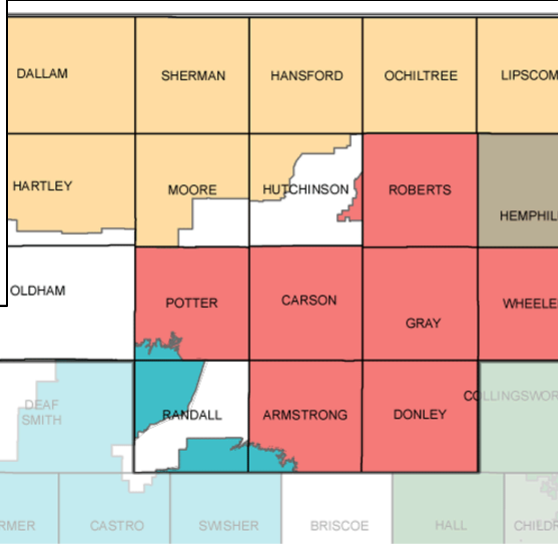
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GCD Inventory

Search

- Number of Counties
- Income Source
- Location of Board Members
- GMA
- Brackish Groundwater Rules
- Reporting Requirements
- Meter Requirements
- Groundwater Export

Reset Submit



North Plains Groundwater Conservation District	
Contact:	Steve Withour General Manager 803 East First Street Dumas, Texas 79029 (806) 935-5401 http://www.npgcd.org/
Enabling/Major Legislation:	Acts 1955, 54th R.S., ch. 499, General and Special Laws of Texas; Acts 1985, 69th R.S., ch. 63, General and Special Laws of Texas; Acts 1983, 68th R.S., ch. 760, General and Special Laws of Texas; Acts 1999, 76th R.S., ch. 1152, General and Special Laws of Texas
Counties Covered:	All of Lipscomb, Ochiltree, Hansford, Sherman and Dallam Counties; parts of Hartley, Moore, and Hutchinson Counties
Income Source:	Both
GCD Population:	50,001-100,000
Community Type:	Rural
Largest Use:	Agriculture
Selection of Board Members:	Elected
Number of Board Members:	7
GMAs:	GMA 1
Groundwater Export:	Yes
Brackish Groundwater Rules:	No (encompassed within current regulations of all groundwater)
Exempt Wells:	Chapter 36 exemptions only
Reporting Requirements:	Yes, for all permitted wells
Reporting Frequency:	Annually
Meter Requirements:	Yes, for all permitted wells
Spacing Requirements:	Wells must be at least 100 yards from property lines; additional spacing requirements are based on well capacity.

<http://www.texasgroundwater.org/resources/gcdi.html>



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Brackish Groundwater \neq TDS Level

- All or most water in some GCDs considered brackish
- Groundwater salinity falls on a continuum
- Implies brackish groundwater not worthy of protection
- Most MAGs do not distinguish based on TDS
- How to determine TDS?
- Who determines TDS?
- What if the TDS changes?
- “Desirability” or “usability” of water is not based solely on TDS



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CSHB 2578

- Brackish Groundwater Production Zones
 - Identified by TWDB with GCD input
 - Must be “sufficiently separated” from currently used groundwater
- No TDS-level definition
- Production/term limits a problem



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Groundwater Committees!

- TAGD, Texas Water Conservation Association, Texas Desalination Association
- Regular Meetings to address at least 10 groundwater subjects, including brackish groundwater



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Common Goals

- Provide more certainty
- Encourage use of currently unutilized/
undesirable groundwater
- Protect regulatory jurisdiction of GCDs
over permitting of all groundwater
- Ensure protection of current and future
sources and uses of groundwater



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TAGD's Additional Goals

- Maintain local management of groundwater
- Ensure private property rights are adequately addressed
- Focus on hydrological connection to currently utilized groundwater, not TDS level



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TWCA Draft Brackish Bill

Two major components:

- Designation of a Brackish Groundwater Production Zone
- Permit at GCD Level



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BGPZ Designation

- Designated by GCD or after petition from project developer
- Zone must meet specifications related to current uses and connectivity
- Developer must prove up the zone conditions; GCD decision appealable to TWDB



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BGPZ Production Permit

- Issued by GCD; processed as uncontested application
- Production limits, permit terms, and monitoring requirements must be consistent with BGPZ designation
- Can be amended if unexpected impacts



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Where Do We Go from Here?

- Committees will be voting on the drafts this fall
- Private property rights and appeal at TWDB still being discussed
- Long-term permitting bill feedback positive so far



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Questions?

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