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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 18, 2017

HPWD AND WOLFFORTH TO COST SHARE TEST WELL

LUBBOCK TX (*January 18, 2017*) – The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors unanimously agreed to cost-share an exploratory well with the City of Wolfforth to investigate the Dockum and the Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) aquifers in western Lubbock County.

Wolfforth City Manager Darrell Newsom presented the proposal at the January 10 HPWD Board of Directors meeting. The Board agreed to allocate $90,000 to assist with the project, plus US Geological Survey logging costs.

The City of Wolfforth has recently concentrated their efforts to ensure citizens have a reliable source of drinking water for years to come. They have just completed a cutting edge water treatment plant to improve the quality of their water. Now they are focusing on their supply.

The Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer lies beneath the Ogallala, and the City of Wolfforth hopes to obtain a well in that aquifer at a depth of about 300 feet. If adequate water is located and can be produced, this will reduce the cost of pumping Ogallala water from their well field located outside of the city limits.

The test hole will be drilled into the Dockum Aquifer to a depth of 1,700 feet, and logged by the U.S. Geological Survey. After logging, the test hole will be filled to the bottom of the Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer. Depending upon the test hole results, it may be reamed and cased for use as a municipal well to supplement the City of Wolfforth's current groundwater supply.

"The Edwards-Trinity Aquifer will hopefully provide us with a water source that will not compete with our own wells or the irrigation wells in the area," Newsom said. "Our partnership with HPWD will allow us to share information with other cities in the region, and that will help all of us. HPWD's cooperation and support will allow us to obtain much more complete data than we would be able to obtain and understand on our own."

This is the District's third partnership with a municipality to explore the Dockum Aquifer. In 2016, the cities of Abernathy and Lubbock, with assistance from the HPWD, drilled test wells into the Dockum to determine the quality and quantity of the brackish aquifer. Lubbock's test well, located near the South Water Treatment Plant, was completed in December.

"We are learning more about the Dockum Aquifer as a result of these efforts," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman. "In recent years, the District has established a monitoring network in this aquifer, and these partnerships allow us to add additional data collection sites to the network."

Construction of this test hole is expected to start in early 2017.

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- 30 -

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 23, 2017

USDA-NRCS ANNOUNCES RCPP FUNDING AVAILABILITY

LUBBOCK TX (*January 23, 2017*) – The United States Department of Agriculture - Natural Resources Conservation Service (USDA-NRCS) has announced an estimated $300,000 in annual funding for the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) in the Panhandle-South Plains region.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock will serve as the lead partner for the five-year program (2016-2020). Supporting partners with HPWD include Hemphill County UWCD, Llano Estacado UWCD, Mesa UWCD, North Plains GCD, Sandy Land UWCD, and South Plains UWCD.

According to the USDA-NRCS, the conservation program encourages partners to join efforts with producers to increase the restoration/sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife, and other related natural resources on a regional or watershed basis.

The NRCS and its partners will help producers install and maintain conservation practices in selected project areas. Partners leverage RCPP funding and report on benefits achieved.

RCPP will address irrigation water management and soil moisture management in the Panhandle-South Plains region.

Chemigation check valves, flowmeters, and soil moisture monitoring equipment are among the high priority items for RCPP funding.

Participation in RCPP is entirely voluntary. Interested producers can now sign up for the program at their local USDA-NRCS service center.

Participating groundwater conservation districts do not receive any funding for the program—but will be providing in-kind services to assist with water conservation efforts.

This includes an educational component to promote adoption of best management practices to improve irrigation application efficiencies as well as use of more water efficient/drought resistant seed varieties.

RCPP builds upon existing USDA-NRCS programs to address water conservation needs. These include the Agriculture Conservation Easement Program (ACEP), Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP), and Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

Additional information about RCPP is available at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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- 30 -

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 30, 2017

CROSBYTON STUDENTS WIN 2017 H2YOU CONTEST

LUBBOCK TX (*January 30, 2017*) – A group of Crosbyton High School students are winners of the 2017 H2YOU water conservation awareness contest, sponsored by the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock.

Timothy Appling, Briana Garcia, Kenley Henn, and Rose Williams presented their municipal water conservation campaign to a panel of judges at the HPWD office on January 30. Sharon West and Ben Stokes of Crosbyton Independent School District are the team sponsors.

Judges were: Mary Jane Buerkle, Director of Communications and Public Affairs, Plains Cotton Growers, Inc.; Matt Ernst, Chief Meteorologist, FOX34; Molly Morris,Conservation Program Educator, City of Lubbock Water Utilities; and Aubrey Spear, P. E., Director of Utilities for the City of Lubbock. Spear is also chairman of the Llano Estacado Regional Water Planning Group (“Region O”).

Using the theme, “Investigating Possibilities,” the students examined the City of Crosbyton’s current water resources and explored potential water conservation strategies. This included: 1) a possible retrofit of the existing water treatment plant at White River Lake for greater efficiency and 2) non-potable reuse of treated wastewater by the City of Crosbyton.

“Water equates life. Water conservation must be everyone’s problem, and everyone must be part of the solution . . . The possibilities are endless if the desire (*for water conservation*) is there before the emergency arises,” the students wrote in their proposal.

The Crosbyton High School seniors earned an all-expense paid trip to Austin, where they will present their municipal water conservation campaign to their state representative and/or members of the Texas Water Development Board. They will also give their presentation at an upcoming meeting of the HPWD Board of Directors.

This is the third consecutive year that Crosbyton ISD students have won the contest. “Year One addressed innovation in the areas of agriculture. Year Two addressed the residential aspects through teaching the youth water saving techniques. Year Three focuses on the municipality of Crosbyton. Together, the possibilities are endless,” states the students’ proposal.

Second place honors went to Aubrie Fields, Tucker Howell, Callen Netherland, and Emma Rich of Sudan. The four FFA members discussed the role of subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) in reducing groundwater waste and increasing crop yield.

“The HPWD Board of Directors and staff commend the student teams for their hard work, insight, and dedication in addressing water conservation issues. The judges were very impressed with the students and their presentations,” said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator.

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- 30 -

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: February 23, 2017

HPWD SCHEDULES RAINWATER HARVESTING WORKSHOPS

LUBBOCK TX (*February 23, 2017*) – We all know "April showers bring May flowers." However, rainfall from April showers can be used to irrigate flowers later in the year with proper use of rainwater harvesting techniques.

HPWD is hosting a series of workshops in March, April, and May to share rainwater harvesting information with area residents. The cost of each workshop is $20 at the door. In addition, the first 25 persons to RSVP will receive a free rainwater harvesting barrel and a rain chain—courtesy of HPWD.

Workshops will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the following locations:

- **March 30** -- Ollie Liner Center, 2000 S. Columbia, Plainview TX.
- **April 6** -- Bailey County Electric Co-op, 610 E. American Blvd, Muleshoe TX.
- **April 13** -- Mallet Event Center, 2320 S. U.S. 385, Levelland TX.
- **April 27** -- Cole Community Center, 300 N. 16th Street, Canyon, TX.
- **May 4** -- HPWD Office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX.

"We will have a panel of experts at each workshop who will share their hands-on experience with rainwater catchment. So whether you're a novice or already have a rainwater harvesting system, this is a great learning opportunity," said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator.

This is the fourth year for the HPWD sponsored workshops.

Persons may register for the workshops at www.hpwd.org/rsvp or by calling the HPWD office at (806) 762-0181.

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- 30 -

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 1, 2017

INSPECTING YOUR DOMESTIC WELL IS A GOOD PRACTICE

LUBBOCK TX (*March 1, 2017*) – As with many other household items, a periodic inspection of your domestic water well is a good practice.

Early detection of any potential problems can save you both time and money--since this allows small problems to be repaired before they become worse.

"March 5-11, 2017 is National Groundwater Awareness Week. It serves as a reminder for annual inspection and maintenance of domestic water wells. This can help ensure proper operation of the well and eliminate any problems that might impact groundwater quality," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman, P.E.

Consider these areas when inspecting your well:

1. A properly completed and maintained well has a surface seal in good condition. If your well has a concrete slab, look for severe cracks or deterioration that may occur. These issues may permit surface erosion near the casing, and compromise the well structure at the surface.

Instead of a slab, some wells have a steel or PVC sleeve around the well casing. Like a slab, this helps protect the well casing and maintain a proper seal between the bore hole and casing.

2. Look at the electric control box and wires. Weather and rodents may damage wires that are not inside a conduit.

3. The well plate should fit properly on top of the casing. Also, there should be a proper fitting where the electrical wires enter the well plate. A proper fit ensures that the casing, and your water source, are not exposed to any unwanted debris. During the winter, a well may be covered with insulation of varying kinds. Mice and other rodents are also drawn to these areas, and may contaminate a well that is not properly sealed and maintained.

4. The soil surface near the well should be graded so that water drains away from the well casing, slab, or casing sleeve. This helps prevent any possible contamination from runoff that may occur following a rain event.

5. Control vegetation and weeds around the water well. Overgrown areas may hide problem areas and encourage rodent activity.

Contact your local pump installer or water well driller if you note any problems during your inspection. These licensed professionals are skilled at water well repair and maintenance.

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- 30 -

Contamination Concerns

Even the smallest opening can allow rainfall runoff or other contaminants to enter a domestic water well. HPWD encourages well owners to conduct periodic inspections to locate openings that could contribute to potential contamination of groundwater in the well. This practice can also help reduce the risk of illness resulting from consumption of well water contaminated with bacteria. (*HPWD Photos*).

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 22, 2017

REGISTER NOW FOR RAINWATER HARVESTING WORKSHOPS

LUBBOCK TX (*March 22, 2017*) – It's not too late to reserve your spot at a series of rainwater harvesting workshops in March, April, and May sponsored by High Plains Underground Water Conservation District in Lubbock (HPWD).

"Speakers at each workshop will share their expertise in rainwater harvesting and water smart landscaping with attendees. In addition to getting valuable information, the first 25 persons to RSVP for each workshop will receive a free rainwater harvesting barrel and a free rain chain—courtesy of HPWD," said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator.

Workshops will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at the following locations:

- **March 30** -- Ollie Liner Center, 2000 S. Columbia, Plainview TX.
- **April 6** -- Bailey County Electric Co-op, 610 E. American Blvd, Muleshoe TX.
- **April 13** -- Mallet Event Center, 2320 S. U.S. 385, Levelland TX.
- **April 27** -- Cole Community Center, 300 N. 16th Street, Canyon, TX.
- **May 4** -- HPWD Office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock, TX.

There is a $20 fee which is payable at the door.

Persons may register for the workshops at www.hpwd.org/rsvp or by calling the HPWD office at (806) 762-0181.

This is the fourth year for the HPWD sponsored workshops.

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- 30 -

JOIN HPWD for a series of rainwater harvesting workshops.

The first 25 to register will receive a FREE rain barrel & rain chain!

Each workshop features a panel of local rain catchment experts.

$20 fee due at the door.

Visit hpwd.org/rsvp or call 806.762.0181 to reserve your spot today!

Contact **katherine.drury@hpwd.org** for further questions.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District
2930 Avenue Q Lubbock, TX 79411 | 806.762.0181 | hpwd.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 23, 2017

WATER CONSERVATION LEADERS RECEIVE BLUE LEGACY AWARD

AUSTIN TX (*March 23,2017*) -- A trio of area agricultural water conservation leaders were honored with a special award during Texas Water Day at the Capitol, March 22, in Austin.

The 2017 Blue Legacy Award in Agricultural Water Conservation was presented to Ronnie and R.N. Hopper of Harmony Farms in Petersburg (*producer*) and former Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Agricultural Engineer Leon New of Amarillo (*non-producer*).

The award, given by the Water Conservation Advisory Council, “celebrates innovators who champion the preservation of the state’s most precious resource — water.”

Ronnie and R.N. Hopper were early adopters of numerous water saving best management practices, including crop residue management and conservation tillage. As a result, they now apply 35 percent less groundwater to their corn and cotton crops than before. Both share their knowledge about no-till practices through an annual field day for producers. Ronnie Hopper is an elected director of the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD), representing the portion of Floyd County within the district, all of Hale County, and all of Swisher County.

Leon New of Amarillo promoted irrigation application efficiency during his 40 year career as an agricultural engineer with Texas A&M Research and Extension. Much of this was accomplished through more than 450 field demonstrations comparing various irrigation systems—such as furrow, alternate furrow, surge valve, low energy precision application (LEPA), and subsurface drip irrigation. In addition, New and Dr. Bill Lyle conducted field tests resulting in development of LEPA systems, which have been readily adopted by agricultural producers across the Texas High Plains. He also has worked with producers on ways to improve pumping plant efficiencies to conserve both energy and water.

“HPWD congratulates the 2017 Blue Legacy Award winners. Each has been a great leader in

promoting best management practices that will allow agricultural producers to achieve the highest irrigation application efficiencies and best use of their water," said General Manager Jason Coleman.

Visit **www.savetexaswater.org/awards/index.asp** for additional information about winners in each of the seven award categories.

The Water Conservation Advisory Council provides the Governor of Texas, Lieutenant Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, state legislature, Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ), political subdivisions, and the public with expertise in water conservation matters.

The annual Texas Water Day at the Capitol event is hosted by the Texas Water Foundation.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24, 2017

HPWD ACCEPTING RFPs FOR WATER CONSERVATION RESEARCH

LUBBOCK TX (*March 24, 2017*) – The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) is now accepting requests for proposals (RFPs) for water conservation research, demonstrations, and educational efforts for Fiscal Year 2017.

Proposals are due May 1, 2017. Instructions for submitting proposals are available atwww.hpwd.org/research/ Just follow the link -- "HPWD Research and Demonstration Policy."

“Highest priority is placed on proposals relating to groundwater recharge, rainwater harvesting, and practices to conserve irrigation water in agricultural or urban use. The HPWD Board of Directors look forward to receiving proposals that will help conserve water and benefit district residents,” said Manager Jason Coleman.

Earlier this month, a research and demonstration funding committee was appointed by HPWD Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo.

The Committee members are:

- Mike Beauchamp, Chairman (HPWD Precinct Three Director).
- Ronnie Hopper (HPWD Precinct Five Director).
- Jason Coleman (HPWD General Manager).
- Kelly Kettner (HPWD County Advisory Committee member).
- Kevin Riley (HPWD County Advisory Committee member).
- Todd Pope, Wellington State Bank (At-Large Member).
- Aubrey Spear, P.E, Director of Utilities, City of Lubbock (At-Large Member).

In accordance with current policy, the committee will evaluate each project for possible funding. A final recommendation will be presented to the HPWD Board of Directors in a few months.

Projects funded in Fiscal Year 2016 include: Alternate Crop Systems for Limited Groundwater; Dockum Aquifer Water Quality Monitoring; Evaluation of The Dockum Aquifer in Southwest Potter County; Rainwater Harvesting Economic Analysis; Soil Endoscope for Subsurface Drip Irrigation; Water Treatment Using Plant-Based Polymers; and installation of a xeric landscape demonstration garden at Bushland Elementary School.

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- 30 -

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 24, 2017

HPWD SEEKS IRRIGATION ASSESSMENT PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS

LUBBOCK TX (*March 24, 2017*) – High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) reinstated its Irrigation Assessment Program to better understand the volume of pumping and its effect on aquifers within its 16-county service area.

During the past four years, participating producers volunteered to have their center pivot or subsurface drip irrigation system evaluated by HPWD staff. Water levels are measured at the beginning and the end of the growing season. In addition, flow rates of the wells/irrigation system are checked with an ultrasonic flow meter. The program is a service provided to willing participants.

The pumping hours, total gallons of water per minute, and number of irrigated acres are calculated to determine the total acre-inches of groundwater applied during the growing season.

Water samples are also collected as an extra service to those participating in the program. HPWD is able to check Total Dissolved Solids (TDS), chloride, and pH levels. It is important to understand water chemistry since it impacts the efficient use of supplemental nutrients applied to crops.

Rainfall totals are determined through use of satellite data from April to September. This gives an estimate of the total inches of water available for crop use.

All information gathered by HPWD staff is entered into a database. Total usage may be calculated using pumping hours during the season. This is used with other data to better understand the water level changes in aquifers within the district.

Producers receive a report of all information gathered from their site, including irrigation amounts and pumping data. Several participants have noted that the data has helped them

better understand their system performance. The published information is compiled and averaged by county and crop type.

“HPWD encourages interested agricultural producers to participate in the Irrigation Assessment Program. There are two major benefits. It helps farmers understand how much water is used per year for crop production. It also helps with future water planning efforts where accurate irrigation pumping information must be considered,” said Whitworth.

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Additional information about the HPWD Irrigation Assessment Program is available by contacting Keith Whitworth at (806) 762-0181 or by emailing keith.whitworth@hpwd.org You can also find HPWD on Facebook and Twitter

- 30 -

Contact: KIMBERLY LEGGETT, Texas Water Development Board, (512) 463-5129

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: March 30, 2017

SAMUEL JACKSON, INC. RECEIVES TWDB RAIN CATCHER AWARD

FROM THE TEXAS WATER DEVELOPMENT BOARD

AUSTIN – (*March 29, 2017*) – The Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) announced today the recipients of its annual Texas Rain Catcher Award, a rainwater harvesting competition and recognition program.

Samuel Jackson, Inc. of Lubbock was recognized in the manufacturing category. The company was nominated for the award by High Plains Underground Water Conservation District.

The TWDB's Texas Rain Catcher Award recognizes excellence in the application of rainwater harvesting systems in Texas, promotes rainwater harvesting technology, and educates the public on this important water-saving practice.

Samuel Jackson, Inc., which produces moist air generators used in the cotton ginning process, turned to rainwater harvesting following the 2011 drought when groundwater wells could not produce enough high quality water for the plant's operation. The company installed two 15,000-gallon fiberglass tanks in September 2015 to capture rainwater. The tanks reduced the company's dependence on groundwater, and soon after, the company installed four additional 15,000-gallon tanks. In total, the system has the capacity to capture 90,000 gallons of rainwater.

The system functions by collecting rain from the 48,000-square-foot roof surface of the industrial plant. It is then stored, filtered, and used onsite. The plant can sustain its operations on a total annual rainfall of only six inches. The system also allows the company to increase water use efficiency and sustainability by monitoring the tanks for water use trends.

The Texas Rain Catcher Award competition began in 2007 and is open to all individuals, companies, organizations, municipalities, and other local and state governmental entities in

Texas. It recognizes entities and individuals in the rainwater harvesting community and beyond and establishes award recipients as dedicated water conservation leaders in Texas. Samuel Jackson, Inc. is one of five awardees being recognized statewide this year.

The TWDB is the state agency charged with collecting and disseminating water-related data, assisting with regional planning and preparing the state water plan for the development of the state's water resources. The TWDB administers cost-effective financial assistance programs for the construction of water supply, wastewater treatment, flood control, and agricultural water conservation projects.

- 30 -

Representatives of Samuel Jackson, Inc. of Lubbock receive the Texas Rain Catcher award at the March 29 Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) meeting in Austin. Shown L-R are: Mark Gentry, TWDB Member Kathleen Jackson, TWDB Member Peter Lake, Jeff Sallee, Chris Jackson, Jeremy Osborne, and TWDB Chairman Bech Bruun. *(Photo courtesy TWDB.)*

HIGH PLAINS UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

News Release

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Writer: **Mr.** CARMON E. McCAIN**, Information/Education Group Supervisor, (806) 762-0181.**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: April 27, 2017

CONSERVE WATER THIS SPRING & SUMMER

LUBBOCK TX (*April 27, 2017*)--Outdoor water use can account for 50 to 80 percent of a home's total water use in the spring and summer. Much of this water is often wasted by inefficient landscape watering practices, including runoff.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) encourages people to incorporate water-efficient practices into their landscapes to avoid water waste.

- Add water efficient plant varieties into your landscape. These plants are native or well-adapted to climate conditions in your area. Additional information is available at texastreeplanting.tamu.edu and texassuperstar.com

- Reduce water evaporation by irrigating at proper times. Evaporation losses can be 60 percent or higher during the day. You can reduce this by irrigating in early morning or late evening. Be sure to follow your town or city landscape watering ordinances, if applicable.

- Do not water landscapes on windy days. Wind drift and evaporation increase water losses.

- Consider use of drip irrigation to water narrow parkway areas or reduce turf in those areas with water-wise plant varieties that can thrive on less water.

- Position sprinklers so that driveways and sidewalks are not irrigated. Check spray patterns for variations caused by changes in water pressure.

- Consider rainwater harvesting to collect/store water for future use in your landscape. Visit rainwaterharvesting.tamu.edu for more information.

- Use mulch to retain soil moisture, reduce runoff, moderate soil temperature, and to slow weed growth.

- Use a low-angle sprinkler that throws large drops of water—rather than one that sprays a fine mist of water that can evaporate quickly.

- Homeowners with automatic sprinkler systems should regularly check spray nozzles to make sure they are operating properly. Be sure to replace any broken sprinkler heads, valves, seals, or pipes.

- Adjust the run time and frequency of automatic landscape sprinkler systems in response to changes in rainfall/temperature. Consider installing rain sensors to automatically shut off sprinkler systems during rainfall events.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: May 4, 2017

WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS REVEAL AVERAGE DECREASE OF - 0.52 OF A FOOT WITHIN HPWD IN 2016-2017

LUBBOCK TX (*May 4, 2017*) – Annual water level measurements indicate an average decrease of – 0.52 of a foot in the groundwater levels of the Ogallala Aquifer within the 16-county High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) service area from 2016 to 2017.

The 10-year district average change (2007-2017) is – 8.84 feet while the five-year district average change (2012-2017) is -3.94 feet.

Water level measurements were made from December 2016 to March 2017 in 1,377 privately-owned water wells completed into the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (*High Plains*) Aquifer. In addition, HPWD personnel made water level measurements in 32 wells in the district's Dockum Aquifer observation well network.

"These current data are now available for viewing on the interactive web map at **map.hpwd.org**. We encourage area residents to visit the website and view charts of water level changes as well as the saturated thickness for each of the observation wells in the networks. Our online tools can help people understand the variability in saturated thickness and groundwater levels within the district," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman.

Results of the 2017 HPWD water level measurements are also presented in an 84-page report available for online viewing/downloading at http://www.hpwd.org/reports/. A limited number of print copies are available by contacting the HPWD office at (806) 762-0181.

The HPWD Board of Directors and staff thank the many landowners and operators who continue to support the water level observation network by providing access to their wells for water level measurements each year.

“These measurements provide a wealth of important information that assists the district with its water conservation efforts. We greatly appreciate everyone’s assistance,” Coleman said.

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Visit www.hpwd.org or follow the district on Facebook or Twitter for more information!

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Average Water Level Changes (feet of change)

(+) Water Level Rise *(-) Water Level Decline*

	Number of Observation Wells Maintained	Average Change 2007 to 2017 (10 Year)	Average Change 2012 to 2017 (5 year)	Average Change 2016 to 2017 (1 year)
Armstrong	10	+3.35	+1.71	+0.77
Bailey	114	-8.96	-3.90	-0.53
Castro	109	-20.07	-11.69	-2.11
Cochran	81	-5.76	-1.82	-0.26
Crosby	69	-6.96	-1.72	-0.30
Deaf Smith	90	-9.98	-4.23	-0.99
Floyd	101	-8.13	-3.64	-0.40
Hale	120	-15.56	-6.10	-0.83
Hockley	99	-4.56	-1.54	+0.07
Lamb	132	-15.25	-6.56	-0.84
Lubbock	115	-3.17	-1.17	+0.03
Lynn	92	+2.78	+2.43	+0.59
Parmer	111	-19.08	-9.18	-1.10
Potter	7	-2.99	-1.20	-0.36
Randall	50	-1.67	-0.37	+0.02
Swisher	77	-2.97	-1.41	-0.05
DISTRICT	**1377**	**-8.84**	**-3.94**	**-0.52**

District-wide Average Water Level Changes (in feet)

2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
- 0.52	+ 0.37	- 0.56	- 1.32	- 1.87	- 2.56	- 0.05	- 1.50	- 1.18	- 0.20	- 0.91

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 5, 2017

RAIN GAUGE DATA NOW AVAILABLE ON INTERACTIVE MAP FEATURE

LUBBOCK TX (*June 5, 2017*) – Tipping bucket rain gauge data and a search function are recent additions to the interactive map feature on the HPWD website (map.hpwd.org).

Selecting 'Rain Gauge Network" on the top menu allows access to a map showing each of the 23 rain gauge locations as a blue dot. Clicking the dot brings up a link to a bar chart with cumulative rainfall for the year. Another mouse click on the rainfall data expands the chart to display rainfall totals for each day of the month. The site also features a link to 2016 rainfall data.

Prior to May 2017, the majority of rain gauges were located within the Texas Alliance for Water Conservation (TAWC) project field sites. Since then, more locations have been added near the district's observation well sites. These gauges help validate the precipitation totals from other sources, which are primarily radar-estimated.

A search function gives visitors the opportunity to locate map features by city, district well number, place name, and longitude and latitude. It is available by selecting the magnifying glass icon.

"These are just a few of the new improvements planned for the interactive map in the coming months. We invite people to use the map functions and provide feedback on them. HPWD staff are always looking for new ways to improve this web based tool," said Manager Jason Coleman.

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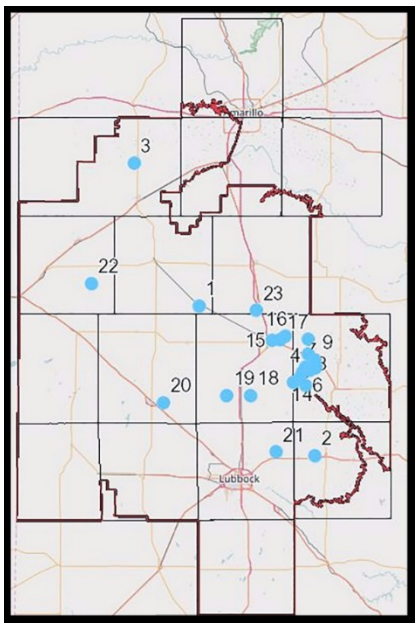
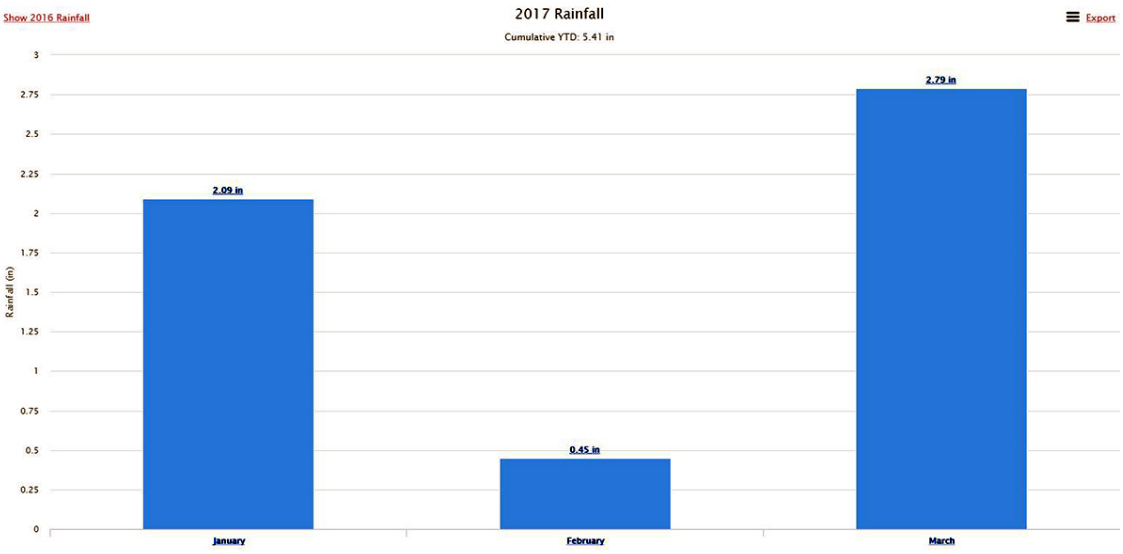
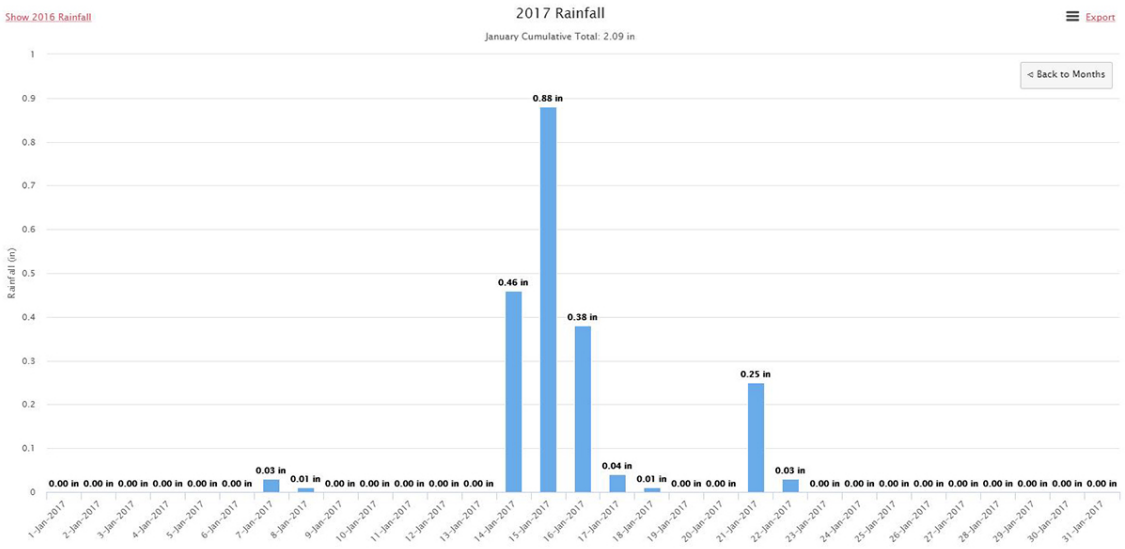
Current tipping bucket rain gauge locations are shown by a blue dot on the interactive map.





Clicking on a blue dot on the interactive map brings up a bar chart showing rainfall totals for the current year at the site. A link at the left of the chart (in red) provides access to the previous year's rainfall data.



Clicking the bars expands the chart to show daily rainfall during the month at the site.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: June 15, 2017

HPWD BOARD APPROVES GRANT FUNDING REQUESTS

LUBBOCK TX (*June 15, 2017*) – The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors approved slightly more than $65,000 in grant fund requests for water-related research and education projects during their June 13 meeting in Lubbock.

“There was a wide range of research proposals for the five-member HPWD Board and its seven-member research and demonstration funding committee to review this year,” said Manager Jason Coleman.

Projects approved for funding include:

- Automatic Center Pivot Speed Control for Irrigation Water Conservation.
- Comparing Forage Potential of Forage Sorghum, Pearl Millet, and Corn under Limited Irrigation.
- Ogallala Commons Community Internship.
- Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors.
- Well Monitoring Instrumentation for the Northern HPWD Region.

“The HPWD Board of Directors is pleased to support these educators and researchers as they work to improve crop production methods, educational efforts, and irrigation technologies. All are designed to help conserve and preserve groundwater resources for the future,” said Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo.

In other business, the HPWD Board of Directors approved applications for water well permits received in May 2017; approved employee health care provider rates for 2017-2018; and approved the private sale/purchase price of “struck off” properties in Anton and Crosbyton. In addition, the Board heard updates from staff regarding education and outreach activities, the regular session of the 85th Texas Legislature, and a new water supply project by Xcel Energy in Lamb County. A closed executive session was not convened.

The next HPWD Board meeting is set for July 11 in Lubbock. Agendas and meeting minutes are available online at www.hpwd.org/agendas.

Created in 1951 by local residents and the Texas Legislature, the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District No.1 is charged with the responsibility of conserving, preserving, protecting, and preventing waste of groundwater within its 16-county service area. HPWD is the first groundwater conservation district created in Texas.

For more information about HPWD supported research, please visit www.hpwd.org/research or call the district office at (806) 762-0181. You can also find HPWD on Facebook and Twitter.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 17, 2017

RCPP FUNDING STILL AVAILABLE FOR INTERESTED PRODUCERS

LUBBOCK TX (*July 17, 2017*) – Funding is still available to producers wanting to participate in the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

About $900,000 in funding was allocated for the five year program (2016-2020). As of July 10, USDA-NRCS officials said the agency has obligated 35 contracts totaling $222,750 on 19,929 acres. This leaves $677,250 in available funds for the remainder of the program.

Participation in RCPP is entirely voluntary. Interested producers can sign up for the program at their local USDA-NRCS service center.

RCPP builds upon existing USDA-NRCS programs to address water conservation needs. These include the Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) and the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP).

A special emphasis is being placed on irrigation water and soil moisture management for the Panhandle-South Plains RCPP. As a result, chemigation check valves, flow meters, and soil moisture monitoring equipment are included in the high priority items for RCPP funding.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock serves as the lead RCPP partner. Supporting partners include Hemphill County UWCD in Canadian, Llano Estacado UWCD at Seminole, Mesa UWCD at Lamesa, North Plains GCD at Dumas, Sandy Land UWCD at Plains, and South Plains UWCD at Brownfield.

These agencies are partnering with producers to increase the restoration/sustainable use of soil, water, wildlife, and other related natural resources on a regional or watershed basis. These groundwater conservation districts do not receive any funding for the program,

but provide in-kind services to assist with water conservation efforts.

Additional information about RCPP is available at **www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov**. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 30, 2017

ALL AIM PROGRAM COST-SHARE FUNDS HAVE BEEN CLAIMED

LUBBOCK TX (*August 30, 2017*)-- In less than two weeks, all cost-share funding for HPWD's Assistance In Irrigation Management (AIM) program has been claimed by producers.

HPWD received $225,000 in grant funding from the Texas Water Development Board's (TWDB) Agricultural Water Conservation Grants Program for the project. The district first announced the AIM program on Aug. 17.

"AIM is a voluntary program to assist producers with the purchase price of telemetry-based irrigation monitoring systems used with either a center pivot system or a subsurface drip irrigation system," said HPWD Manager Jason Coleman. "Clearly, there is great interest in use of this technology as shown by the large number of applications received in such a short period of time," he said.

The Water District will continue to seek grant funding opportunities with the Texas Water Development Board, but no additional funding is available at this time

"HPWD commends these producers for their interest in this equipment. Purchasing and installing these devices can help conserve groundwater. For example, it enables them to remotely monitor irrigation systems and help detect any problems or adjust their systems during rainfall events," said Coleman.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 14, 2017

HPWD BOARD REDUCES 2017 AD VALOREM TAX RATE

LUBBOCK, TX (*September 14, 2017*)--- During their Sept. 12 meeting, the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors approved a resolution reducing the 2017 ad valorem tax rate to $.0069 per $100 valuation for operation and maintenance of the district.

Persons with $100,000 in property value will pay $6.90 in annual taxes to HPWD under the approved rate, as compared to $7.50 in 2016. Overall, the 2017 tax rate is about eight percent lower as compared to 2016, and will generate about four percent less tax revenue

"Our board is able to take this action as a result of its dedication to having balanced budgets during the past four years. In addition, HPWD staff have streamlined operations and reduced expenditures, while expanding services to constituents," said Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo.

In other business, the Board of Directors approved the Consent Agenda; approved applications for water well permits received in August 2017; amended the adopted 2017 budget for end of fiscal year; heard a presentation regarding HPWD supported Dockum Aquifer research from Dr. Venkatesh Uddameri, P.E., director of the Texas Tech University Water Resources Center; and received a staff update about recent additions to the HPWD interactive web map feature.

No executive session was convened.

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HPWD Tax Rate 1997-2017

1997	0.0084
1998	0.00835
1999	0.0084
2000	0.0084
2001	0.0083
2002	0.0084
2003	0.0083
2004	0.0083
2005	0.0083
2006	0.0083
2007	0.00794
2008	0.00794
2009	0.00794
2010	0.00785
2011	0.00776
2012	0.00754
2013	0.0081
2014	0.008026
2015	0.008026
2016	0.0075
2017	0.0069

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: September 15, 2017

HPWD NOW ACCEPTING H2YOU CONTEST ENTRIES

LUBBOCK TX (September *15*, 2017) – Students in grades 9-12 are encouraged to participate in the fourth annual H2You contest sponsored by the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD).

Deadline for entries is December 8, 2017. Participating students must attend school or reside within the 16-county HPWD service area.

“The H2You Contest encourages students to share innovative ideas about water conservation. Each team will design a detailed conservation campaign that proposes a new way to reduce water use by either agriculture, municipalities, or local residents,” said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator. “This is a great extracurricular opportunity for 4-H or FFA participants, as well as students involved in agriculture, science, engineering or speech classes.”

Teams will create a detailed water conservation campaign specifically for the water user group of their choice. The campaign must include at least one of the following: graphic design, videos or photos.

The top five entries will present their proposal to a panel of judges at the HPWD office in Lubbock. Winners will be selected based upon the judges’ recommendations.

First place team winners each receive a $250 cash prize and an all-expense paid trip to Austin in early 2018. They will present their water conservation campaign to their local State Representative and/or representatives of various water-related agencies, including the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The team will also give their presentation to the five-member HPWD Board of Directors at one of their regular monthly meetings. In addition, the winning team’s sponsor(s) receives a $250 classroom prize (*maximum of two teachers*).

Second place team winners each receive a $200 cash prize and third place team members each receive a $150 cash prize.

The team from Crosbyton High School won the 2016 contest.

The H2You contest rules and entry form are available at www.hpwd.org/contest.

Additional information is available by contacting Katherine Drury at (806) 762-0181 or by email at katherine.drury@hpwd.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: OCTOBER 16, 2017

30th ANNIVERSARY OF JESSICA McCLURE ACCIDENT SERVES AS REMINDER TO MAKE SURE OPEN WELLS ARE PROPERLY CLOSED

October 16, 1987.

After 30 years, many still remember the national news bulletins that announced rescuers were about to reach 18-month-old Jessica McClure, who was trapped 22 feet below land surface in an abandoned water well in southwest Midland, TX.

Burly firemen and other volunteers openly wept while the nation breathed a collective sigh of relief as “Baby Jessica” was rushed to a waiting ambulance and treatment at Midland Memorial Hospital.

“That was a near-tragic reminder of the dangers associated with open, abandoned water wells,” said Jason Coleman, P.E., manager of the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock.

“Proper closure of open, unused water wells (‘open holes’) and/or deteriorated wells (‘cave-ins’) prevents tragic loss of human/animal life and protects groundwater in the Ogallala Aquifer from contamination,” he said.

HPWD Precinct One District Director Dan Seale of Lubbock agrees. He investigated numerous reports of open wells and cave-ins during his 42-year career as one of the District’s field technicians.

“There was one instance where an open well was located in a new subdivision in southwest Lubbock. The former agricultural land had been re-developed -- but irrigation wells drilled there years ago still remained,” he said.

Seale said he discovered a piece of particle board near an alleyway. It seemed innocent

enough at first. However, closer examination revealed the splintered, crumbling board was barely covering the opening of a six-inch irrigation well. This caused great concern because of the well's location to homes and the possibility of children and pets playing in the area.

"Locating and getting these wells properly covered is an important duty of the HPWD staff. There have been two children who have fallen into open, uncovered wells since HPWD was created in Sept. 1951. Both children were rescued unharmed. We do not want this to happen again," Seale said.

Sadly, others across the nation have not been so lucky. Many recall three-year-old Kathy Fiscus, who died in April 1949 after falling into an open, abandoned well in San Marino, CA. "Kathy Fiscus" laws were soon passed across the country which required open, abandoned wells to be properly filled and capped.

In addition to potential dangers, uncovered well openings also provide a direct conduit for contaminants to enter the groundwater stored in the Ogallala Formation.

"Open wells can provide tempting disposal places for anything unwanted, which can lead to serious groundwater contamination problems. Once groundwater in an aquifer is contaminated, it is extremely difficult to return it to an unpolluted state suitable for use by humans and livestock," Coleman said.

Rainfall runoff can also carry pollutants into open wells, especially if the casing and pump have been removed.

Open wells are usually reported by telephone calls and/or emails from the public, or by HPWD personnel conducting field work.

Field technicians carry two sizes of well plugs in their pickups. If an open, abandoned water well is located, the field technician will close the well, get a GPS reading on its location, and contact the landowner and/or operator. The landowner/operator has the option to pay $75 for the well plug installed by HPWD or they may remove the plug and cap the well themselves. In both instances, HPWD personnel return to the site to make sure the well is closed in accordance with state law and HPWD rules.

Additional information about proper closure of open wells and cave-ins is available by contacting the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District at (806) 762-0181 or by visiting www.hpwd.org

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 8, 2017

DECEMBER 8 DEADLINE NEARS FOR H2YOU CONTEST ENTRIES

LUBBOCK TX (*November 8, 2017*) -- Students in grades 9-12 are reminded of the upcoming December 8 deadline for entries in the fourth annual H2YOU Contest sponsored by the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD).

Participating students must attend school or reside within the 16-county HPWD service area. Each team must have two students (minimum) or four students (maximum).

“The H2You Contest encourages students to share innovative ideas about water conservation. Each team will design a detailed conservation campaign that proposes a new way to reduce water use by either agriculture, municipalities, or local residents,” said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator. “This is a great extracurricular opportunity for 4-H or FFA participants, as well as students involved in agriculture, science, engineering or speech classes."

Teams will create a detailed water conservation campaign specifically for the water user group of their choice. The campaign must include at least one of the following: graphic design, photos, or videos.

The top five entries will present their proposal to a panel of judges at the HPWD office in Lubbock. Winners will be selected based upon the judges’ recommendations.

First place team winners each receive a $250 cash prize and an all-expense paid trip to Austin in early 2018. They will present their water conservation campaign to their local State Representative and/or representatives of various water-related agencies, including the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB). The team will also give their presentation to the five

member HPWD Board of Directors at one of their regular monthly meetings. In addition, the winning team's sponsor(s) receives a $250 classroom prize (*maximum of two teachers*).

Second place team winners each receive a $200 cash prize and third place team members each receive a $150 cash prize.

Additional information and complete contest rules are available at www.hpwd.org/contest

Additional information is available by contacting Katherine Drury at (806) 762-0181 or by email at katherine.drury@hpwd.org.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DECEMBER 19, 2017

ANNUAL WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS BEGIN JANUARY 2, 2018

LUBBOCK TX (*December 19, 2017*) -- Beginning Jan. 2, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) personnel will begin making water level measurements to determine the effect of 2017 pumping on groundwater levels in aquifers within the district.

These annual measurements are made in a network of more than 1,370 privately-owned wells. These observation wells are spaced at a density of approximately one well per nine square miles throughout the District's 16-county service area.

“We want the public to be aware that our staff will be visiting observation well sites from early January until completion of this work effort. They will be driving white pickup trucks that are clearly identified as Water District vehicles,” said General Manager Jason Coleman.

These water level data are made available to the public through an interactive map on the HPWD website (map.hpwd.org). Persons may access annual observation well data, annual supplemental well data, and daily water level data in select wells using this feature.

“Since its debut in 2013, the interactive map has grown in popularity each year. Most persons now utilize this feature to obtain depth-to-water and saturated thickness information. Because of this, HPWD is discontinuing the printed water level measurement report starting this year," Coleman said. The formal migration to the online data eliminates the cost of printing and mailing the report, and saves HPWD residents considerable money.

Those without computer access are encouraged to contact Jed Leibbrandt at the HPWD office to request print versions of the annual water level measurement data. District staff will accommodate those requests for print versions using a county-specific report.

Additional information about the annual water level measurement program is available by contacting the HPWD office at (806) 762-0181 or by visiting the district website

at www.hpwd.org

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HPWD Field Technician Ray Eads makes a water level measurement in one of the 1,300 privately-owned water wells in the District's observation well network. (HPWD file photo)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 20, 2017

RCPP FUNDS AVAILABLE FOR IRRIGATION MONITORING EQUIPMENT

LUBBOCK TX (*November 20, 2017*) -- Funding to install irrigation system monitoring equipment is now available through the USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service's Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP).

This equipment, typically used with a center pivot or subsurface drip irrigation system, allows monitoring data to be transmitted by telemetry to smart phones, tablets, or other handheld devices. These data help determine if irrigation systems are operating at peak efficiency - which results in water and energy savings for producers.

The RCPP program is an option for producers that were unable to receive funding from HPWD's Assistance in Irrigation Management (AIM) program. The $225,000 in grant funding provided by the Texas Water Development Board was claimed by producers in less than two weeks after the program was announced in August 2017.

This equipment is being cost-shared through RCPP, which is administered by the USDA-NRCS, and requires "a flow meter to be installed on the irrigation system where the irrigation system monitoring system is installed as a companion device." If a contract is awarded, payment for these practices cannot be made until the first year's monitoring data are provided to the NRCS.

About $900,000 in funding was allocated for the five year program (2016-2020). As of Dec. 8, USDA-NRCS officials said the agency has obligated 39 contracts totaling $227,208 on 24,772 acres. This leaves $672,792 in available funds for the remainder of the program.

Participation in RCPP is entirely voluntary. Interested producers can sign up for the program at their local USDA-NRCS service center.

High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock serves as the lead

RCPP partner. Supporting partners include Hemphill County UWCD in Canadian, Llano Estacado UWCD at Seminole, Mesa UWCD at Lamesa, North Plains GCD at Dumas, Sandy Land UWCD at Plains, and South Plains UWCD at Brownfield.

These groundwater conservation districts do not receive any funding for the program, but provide in-kind services to assist with water conservation efforts.

Additional information about RCPP is available at www.tx.nrcs.usda.gov. USDA is an equal opportunity provider, employer, and lender.

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