HIGH PLAINS UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: January 4, 2019

VICTORIA WHITEHEAD PROMOTED TO HPWD GENERAL COUNSEL

LUBBOCK TX (Jan. 4, 2018) – Victoria Whitehead has been promoted to General Counsel for the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) in Lubbock. She previously served as HPWD Governmental Affairs Director.

In addition to some of her previous duties, she will now oversee all groundwater law and policy issues, grant funding acquisitions, HPWD election administration, state and federal compliance, and district representation for other legal matters.

She will represent the district at various association meetings, groundwater planning meetings, and at committee hearings during the upcoming 86th Texas Legislature.

“We are fortunate to have Victoria as part of the HPWD team. Her training and skills are a valuable asset to the district. It is nice to have someone with a local background that understands the issues of this region,” said General Manager Jason Coleman.

Whitehead grew up in the Panhandle, and received her bachelor’s degree in political science and her Juris Doctorate degree from Texas Tech University.

She previously worked in the General Counsel’s office at Texas Tech University and for several legislators before joining the HPWD staff in 2016. These include Senator Robert Duncan of Lubbock, Representative Drew Darby of San Angelo, and U.S. Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison.

Some of her honors include the Texas Tech School of Law’s “Top Extern” award and the Capitol Crowd’s “House Intern Most Likely to be Running the Legislature in 10 years” recognition. Gov.

Greg Abbott appointed her to serve as a Student Regent for the Texas Tech University System Board of Regents for 2015-2016.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: FEBRUARY 28, 2019

HPWD 2019 WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS NEARING COMPLETION

LUBBOCK TX (February 28, 2019) – HPWD field staff are completing their annual water level measurements in 1,400 observation wells within the 16-county High Plains Water District service area.

Initial water level measurements have been made. However, additional measurements ("rechecks") are needed in about 10 percent of the wells.

"There are several reasons for rechecking a well," said Field Staff Supervisor Keith Whitworth. "The majority of the observation wells are privately-owned irrigation wells. If the well is pumping, we are unable to make the depth-to-water level measurement. As a result, we have to return later to make the measurement."

In addition, bees, new fences, or other obstacles can prevent field staff from accessing a well site on their first attempt.

"All rechecks should be completed by the first part of March. We'll spend the rest of the month making our final review of the water level measurement data before it is released to the public," he said.

Final results of the annual water level measurements should be available at map.hpwd.org by early April. A summary of the results will also be available through news releases, social media, and the electronic/print versions of *The Cross Section*.

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A member of the HPWD field staff uses an E-Line to make a depth-to-water level measurement in an observation well in eastern Lubbock County. (*HPWD file photo*)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 13, 2019

HPWD NOW ENROLLING FOR 2019 IRRIGATION ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

LUBBOCK TX (March 13, 2019) – High Plains Underground Water Conservation District is now enrolling producers for participation in its 2019 Irrigation Assessment Program.

Since the program's reinstatement in 2013, cooperating producers have volunteered to have their center pivot or subsurface drip irrigation system evaluated by HPWD staff. Water levels in wells are measured at the beginning and end of the growing season. In addition, flow rates of the wells/irrigation systems are checked with an ultrasonic flow meter. This service is provided by HPWD at no cost to willing participants.

The pumping hours, total gallons of water per minute, and the number of irrigated acres are calculated to determine the total acre-inches of groundwater applied during the growing season. Rainfall totals are determined through the use of radar estimates from April to September. This gives an estimate of the total inches of water available for plant use.

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 of groundwater. It is important to understand water chemistry since it impacts the efficient use of supplemental nutrients applied to crops.

All this information is used to better understand the groundwater conditions in aquifers within the HPWD service area.

For example, the 2018 program participants' well data reveals an average depth-to-water of 225 feet and an average flow rate of 108 gallons per minute. The average amount of irrigation
water applied in 2018 by program participants was 15.2 inches for corn,15 inches for silage, 11.3 inches for cotton, and 5.7 inches for wheat.

All information gathered from each site is shared with program participants. Several producers have said the data has helped them better understand their irrigation system's performance.

"High Plains Water District encourages all interested producers to participate in the 2019 Irrigation Assessment Program. There are two major benefits. First, it helps farmers understand how much water is used per year for crop production. Second, it provides beneficial data for

future water planning efforts where accurate irrigation pumping information must be considered," Whitworth said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 18, 2019

HPWD ACCEPTING PROPOSALS FOR CONSERVATION RESEARCH

LUBBOCK TX (March 18, 2019) – High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) is now accepting proposals for water conservation research, demonstration, and education project funding.

"HPWD funds a number of research and demonstration projects each year. We invite those with innovative ideas to submit requests for proposals that focus on water conservation demonstration, education, or research," said General Manager Jason Coleman.

Proposals are due no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, May 6, 2019. Email delivery is preferred and should be sent to jason.coleman@hpwd.org

Since 2014, HPWD has provided supplemental funding for several research and/or demonstration projects. These include completion of test wells into the Dockum and Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) aquifers; installation of a water conservation education garden at Bushland Elementary; rainwater harvesting research; investigation of residential Turfgrass irrigation habits; brackish groundwater treatment technology using plant polymers; and other water saving measures.

The research and demonstration funding committee was appointed by Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo at the March 12 HPWD Board of Directors meeting.

Committee members include:

- Mike Beauchamp, Chairman (HPWD Precinct Three Director).
- Ronnie Hopper (HPWD Precinct Five Director).
- Dan Seale (HPWD Precinct One Director)
- Jason Coleman (HPWD General Manager).
- Brett Bamert (HPWD Bailey County Advisory Committee Member)
- Dillon Pool (HPWD Randall County Advisory Committee member).
- Darrell Newsom, City Manager, Wolfforth, TX (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 at their June meeting.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 22, 2019

APPLY NOW FOR TX 4-H WATER AMBASSADORS PROGRAM

LUBBOCK TX (March 22, 2019) – Students within the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) service area are encouraged to submit applications for the 2019- 2020 Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors program. Deadline for submissions is May 15.

Each year, high school age youth are selected to join the program which provides knowledge about management of water resources in Texas.

“HPWD is proud to be among the supporters of the Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors program. This is a great opportunity to mentor future water leaders for our state,” said Carmon McCain, HPWD Information/Education Supervisor.

HPWD provided grant funding for the program, which began in 2017. Those chosen will participate in a summer 4-H2O Youth Leadership Academy. This tour, set for July 13-20, allows students to meet with statewide water professionals and observe conservation practices.

"The Panhandle-South Plains region is one of the tour stops each year. HPWD is pleased to have the students visit our office where they learn more about management of local groundwater resources. We also accompany them to a rainwater harvesting installation while they are in Lubbock," said McCain.

A leadership, mentorship, and community service component is included as part of the program. Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors commit to a minimum of 40 hours of service during a 12-month period. This is earned by presenting water education programs to local 4-H clubs, schools, fairs, and other community events. In addition, the students may also assist their local water utilities, groundwater conservation districts, and County Extension Agents in their water outreach programs.

"The ambassadorship is a 12-month commitment starting in July 2019. Those ambassadors who fulfill the minimum 40 hours of service will be invited to continue their terms for the next year," said David W. Smith, TX 4-H20 Ambassador Program Coordinator. " Last year's participants must complete 20 hours service by March 1 to be invited to serve a second term as a Tier II 4-H Water Ambassador."

Applicants must be 14 years of age or older as of Aug. 31, 2019 and must be entering the 9th,

There is a $250 participation fee due by June 10. Applicants do not have to be a current member of Texas 4-H, but must agree to become a 4-H member and pay a $25 annual membership fee, if selected. Persons accepted into the program will be notified by June 1.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 25, 2019

HPWD ANNOUNCES 2019 RAINWATER HARVESTING WORKSHOPS

LUBBOCK TX (March 25, 2019) – High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) will host its annual rainwater harvesting workshops in April and May.

The free workshops will be held from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at these locations:

- **April 11** - Mallet Event Center & Arena, 2320 U.S. Highway 385, Levelland.
- **April 25** - Palo Duro Room, Cole Community Center, 300 N.16th Street, Canyon.
- **May 2** - HPWD office, 2930 Avenue Q, Lubbock.

“As heavier downpours and longer periods between rainfall events become more frequent, we want to share information with the public about larger capacity rainwater catchment systems. This workshop is a great opportunity to hear from those who have hands-on experience with rainwater harvesting," said Katherine Drury, HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator.

Drawings for 25 Ivy rainwater harvesting barrels will be held at each workshop. The barrels hold 50 gallons of harvested rainwater.

Persons should register at **rsvp.hpwd.org** or call the HPWD office at (806) 762-

0181. This is the sixth year that HPWD has hosted the workshops.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: MARCH 29, 2019

AMARILLO BANK, LUBBOCK MANUFACTURER RECEIVE STATE RECOGNITION FOR WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS

LUBBOCK, TX (March 29, 2019) –FirstBank Southwest of Amarillo and Samuel Jackson, Inc. of Lubbock recently received state recognition for their water conservation efforts.

FirstBank Southwest - Texas Rain Catcher Award

FirstBank Southwest received the 2018 Texas Rain Catcher Award at the March 28 Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) meeting in Austin.

Built in 2012, the FirstBank Southwest (FBSW) Western Banking Center is home to one of Amarillo's larger commercial rainwater harvesting installations.

During a rainfall event, several downspouts channel water from the building's metal roof to a permeable paver parking lot. Once below the pavers, the water makes its way into an underground tank.

The permeable pavers and underground tank provide a storage capacity of 26,600 gallons of harvested rainwater. That is the equivalent of 99.6 percent of the rainfall collected during a two-year storm event.

The FBSW banking center also uses a xeric landscape and drip irrigation system to help reduce landscape water use.

Created in 2007, the TWDB's Rain Catcher award program "promotes technology, educates the public, and recognizes excellence in the application of rainwater harvesting systems in Texas."

Samuel Jackson, Inc. - Blue Legacy Award in Manufacturing

Samuel Jackson, Inc. received the 2019 Blue Legacy Award for Manufacturing during ceremonies at the March 13 Texas Water Day at the Capitol in Austin.

Samuel Jackson, Inc. uses harvested rainwater as an alternative water supply source. The company manufactures moisture control and drying equipment for cotton gins.

The rainwater harvesting tanks are carefully monitored to determine water use trends. As a result, water use has been reduced by 30 percent.

The filtered rainwater is excellent quality and offers many benefits during the manufacturing process.

Rainwater harvesting reduces dependence upon groundwater. It also allows for greater water use efficiency and sustainability.

The Water Conservation Advisory Council gives this annual award to “recognize manufacturing water users that have demonstrated outstanding and innovating commitment to the state’s mission of promoting responsible management and conservation of Texas’ water resources.”

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FirstBank Southwest Chairman of the Board Smith Ellis and Chief Lending Officer Will Miller accept the 2018 Texas Rain Catcher Award during the March 28 Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) meeting in Austin. Shown with them (L-R) are TWDB Chairman Peter Lake, Member Brooke Paup, and Member Kathleen Jackson. (Photo courtesy TWDB)

Dr. Bogdan Jackson-Duda with Samuel Jackson, Inc. accepts the Blue Legacy in Manufacturing Award from Water Conservation Advisory Council Chair Karen Guz (L) and Texas Water Development Board Member Kathleen Jackson (R). (Photo courtesy TWDB)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 5, 2019

APRIL IS NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH

ANNUAL IRRIGATION SYSTEM INSPECTION CAN HELP CONSERVE WATER

LUBBOCK TX (April 5, 2019) – April is National Garden Month! Longer days and warmer temperatures are prompting many area residents to prepare their home gardens and landscapes for the 2019 growing season. It's also the perfect time to add practices to avoid inefficient watering and/or water waste this spring and summer.

"Outdoor water use can account for 50 to 80 percent of home water use in the spring and summer," said Information/Education Supervisor Carmon McCain with High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD). "Because of this, area residents are encouraged to examine their automatic sprinkler systems and repair them as needed to achieve optimum performance this year," he said.

Even the best-designed irrigation system will show signs of wear and tear over time. An annual irrigation system inspection can help save water that may otherwise be wasted.

Homeowners should watch their automatic sprinkler system as it operates. Sunken sprinkler heads should pop up easily without being obstructed by vegetation. They should be adjusted to make sure water is not applied to streets, sidewalks, driveways, or other surfaces that allow runoff. Sprinklers should throw a large drop of water -- instead of a fine mist. This reduces the amount of water lost to evaporation and wind drift. Be sure to replace any sprinkler heads damaged by mowing--as well as any broken valves, seals or pipes.

McCain said it is important to know how much water is being applied by an irrigation system during a given time period. Setting empty cat food/tuna cans or other shallow containers on the lawn is an easy method that homeowners can use to gauge the amount of water their sprinkler applies to the turf. Once the containers are in place, be sure to note the amount of time it takes to deliver one-half inch of water to the lawn. This determines how long to operate the system to deliver the needed amount of water to the landscape.

This technique is demonstrated in a Texas A&M AgriLife Research/Extension YouTube video at www.youtube.com/watch?v=1nIwZ_imn9w

In many instances, irrigation system controllers are initially programmed and then forgotten.

Adjusting automatic sprinkler systems in response to changing climatic conditions can help reduce water waste and save money for homeowners and businesses. HPWD encourages persons to contact their local landscaping professional or landscape irrigation specialist for instructions on adjusting controller settings.

When irrigating your lawn this spring and summer, please be aware of and comply with landscape watering ordinances your town or city may have in place.

“With planning and implementation of proven water conservation methods, homeowners can have a beautiful landscape that conserves the surface and ground water resources of the Texas High Plains,” McCain said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 12, 2019

WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS INDICATE AVERAGE DECLINE OF -1.05 FEET WITHIN HPWD SERVICE AREA IN 2018-2019

LUBBOCK TX (April 12, 2019) – An average change of -1.05 feet was noted in the groundwater levels of the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer from 2018 to 2019 within the 16-county High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD).

The 10-year District average change (2009-2019) is -8.83 feet while the five-year District average change (2014-2019) is -2.13 feet. The average saturated thickness of the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer within the District is 56 feet (2018-2019). It remained unchanged from last year.

HPWD staff shared final results of the 2019 water level measurements with the District's five-member Board of Directors at their April 9 meeting.

Beginning in January, HPWD field personnel made water level measurements in a network of 1,356 privately-owned water wells completed into the Ogallala/Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifer. In addition, measurements were also made in 31 Dockum Aquifer wells.

County wide average declines were recorded in 15 of the 16 counties in the District since the 2018 measurements.

"This can probably be attributed to the fact that the area received about half the rainfall in 2018 as it did in 2017. A large amount of irrigation was needed up until the time that it rained toward the end of the growing season," said HPWD Field Technician Supervisor Keith Whitworth.

Whitworth shared the following statistics for observation wells with publishable measurements.

- 234 observation wells with increases ranging from 0.1 to 5.41 feet.
- 518 observation wells with decreases ranging from 0 to -.99 of a foot.
- 279 observation wells with decreases ranging from – 1 to -1.99 feet.
- 173 observation wells with decreases ranging from -2 to -2.99 feet.
- 58 observation wells with decreases ranging from -3 to -3.99 feet.
- 26 observation wells with decreases ranging from -4 to -4.99 feet.
- 29 observation wells with decreases ranging from -5 to -12.98 feet.

“Each year, there are wells that show water level rises and others that show water level declines. The largest water level rise was 5.41 feet in a Lynn County well and the largest water level decline was -12.98 feet in a Floyd County well,” Whitworth said. “Groundwater recharge occurs quickly in Lynn County due to sandier soils and a shallow water table. The area in Floyd County where the large decline is shown takes much longer to recover from the previous irrigation season,” he said.

Results of the 2019 water level measurements and updated saturated thickness information are now available on the interactive map on the HPWD website (**map.hpwd.org**). Those who want printed information should contact Jed Leibbrandt at (806) 762-0181 or email him at jed.leibbrandt@hpwd.org. He can provide print copies of water level measurement data for an individual county or specific counties of interest.

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2019 WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS

High Plains Water District staff measured 1,356 observation wells in the Ogallala and Edwards-Trinity (High Plains) Aquifers in early 2019 to determine the water level changes since 2018.

District Average Change

[-1.05 feet]

Avg. Saturated Thickness

[56 feet]

View all observation well data at **map.hpwd.org**

2019 County Summary

County	Obs. Well Count	Avg. Change (feet)	Avg. Saturated Thickness (feet)
Armstrong	10	0.17	37
Bailey	99	-0.79	62
Castro	104	-2.04	61
Cochran	82	-0.66	39
Crosby	69	-1.17	91
Deaf Smith	94	-1.08	63
Floyd	99	-1.61	68
Hale	121	-1.43	59
Hockley	98	-1.12	40
Lamb	116	-1.09	50
Lubbock	124	-1.00	58
Lynn	95	-0.48	48
Parmer	103	-1.04	51
Potter	7	-0.43	52
Randall	51	-0.20	53
Swisher	84	-0.51	47

District-wide Average Water Level Changes

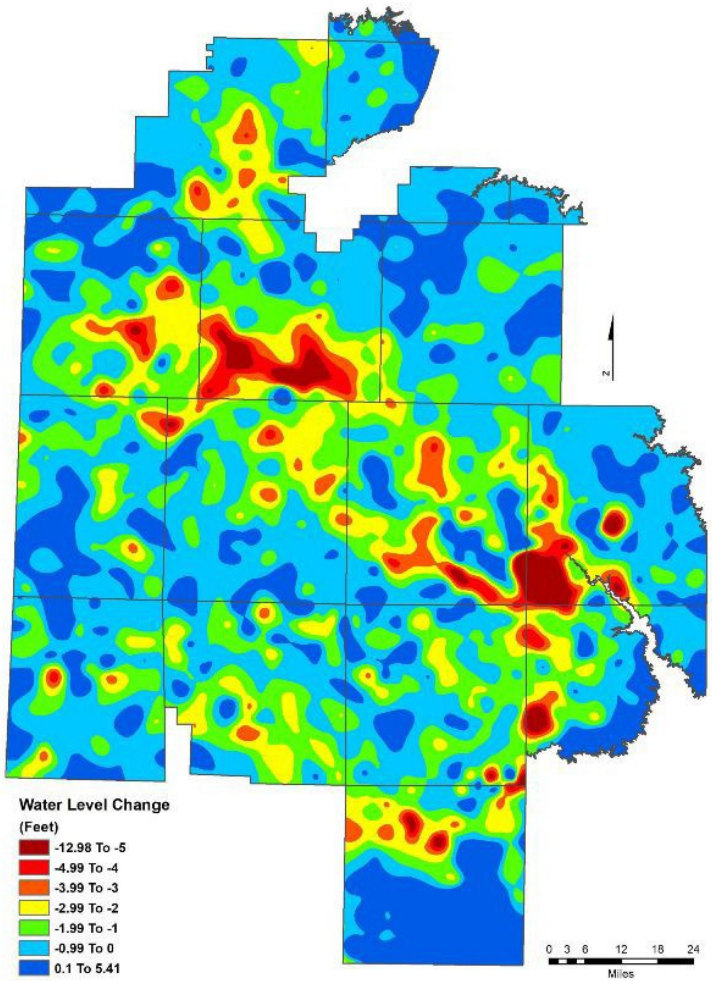
Year	Average Change (feet)
2019	-1.05
2018	-0.16
2017	-0.52
2016	+0.37
2015	-0.56
2014	-1.32
2013	-1.87
2012	-2.56
2011	-0.05
2010	-1.50

See map on back for areas of change.

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

Updated 4/1/19

2019 WATER LEVEL CHANGE



Maximum Water Level Rise

5.41 feet

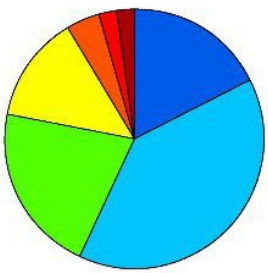
Lynn County

Maximum Water Level Decline

-12.98 feet

Floyd County

Analysis of Water Level Changes (feet)



-12.98 to -5	29 wells
-4.99 to -4	26 wells
-3.99 to -3	58 wells
-2.99 to -2	173 wells
-1.99 to -1	279 wells
-0.99 to 0	518 wells
0.1 to 5.41	234 wells

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 12, 2019

APRIL IS NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH

INCORPORATING NATIVE PLANTS IN LANDSCAPES CAN HELP SAVE WATER

LUBBOCK TX (April 12, 2019) – April is National Garden Month! Incorporating native plants in your landscape can provide color and save water at the same time.

"Native plants have adapted to withstand the Panhandle-South Plains climate. Not only are they accustomed to our dry, hot weather -- but native plants are an important component of our regional ecology. They can help support pollinators and other wildlife," says Education/Outreach Coordinator Katherine Drury with High Plains Underground Water Conservation District in Lubbock. She is also a Texas Master Gardener.

"HPWD would like to share some favorite native plants that are beautiful and have low water requirements," she said.

American Basketflower is a striking Texas native. This beautiful purple wildflower often blooms along roadways in spring. "Basket flower" refers to the straw-colored bracts beneath the flower head. Although it resembles a thistle, it lacks their prickly characteristics.

Blackfoot Daisy can be found growing during the driest and hottest of years. Local horticulture experts reportedly found a mound of Blackfoot Daisies during the 2011 drought. These little flowers grow in low mounds and are perfect for flower beds.

Chocolate Daisy is native to the southwestern United States and Mexico. Not only is it a beautiful, drought-tolerant perennial, but it actually smells like chocolate!

Prairie Coneflower can be found across Texas. It is a quick and aggressive grower that is easily started from seed. If you are growing these in your garden, allow the plants to go to seed after flowering ceases in Autumn. You can then collect the seeds or mow down the stalks.

Tahoka Daisy is native to the Texas South Plains. It was first discovered in 1898 at Tahoka Lake. The Tahoka Daisy, also called Prairie Aster, is an annual wildflower that prefers sand or gravel soils in full sun.

"These are just a few of the native plants available for local landscapes. Homeowners should

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consider using plants that flourish in high temperatures and low rainfall conditions," says Drury.

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AMERICAN BASKETFLOWER

(HPWD photo by Katherine Drury)

BLACKFOOT DAISY

(HPWD photo by Katherine Drury)

PRAIRIE CONEFLOWER

(HPWD photo by Katherine Drury)

TAHOKA DAISY

(HPWD photo by Katherine Drury)

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: APRIL 22, 2019

APRIL IS NATIONAL GARDEN MONTH

MULCH IN FLOWERBEDS CAN REDUCE EVAPORATION AND SAVE WATER

LUBBOCK TX (April 22, 2019) – April is National Garden Month! High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) reminds gardeners that adding mulch to flowerbeds can help save water by reducing the amount of moisture lost to evaporation.

"Few gardening practices are as effective and easy as mulching," says HPWD Education and Outreach Coordinator Katherine Drury. She is also a Texas Master Gardener.

She said a two to four inch layer of mulch can help reduce the amount of moisture that evaporates from the soil. This, in turn, decreases the amount of additional irrigation needed to replace the lost moisture.

"Mulch provides many benefits to a landscape," said Drury. "It reduces soil compaction and erosion, it keeps soils cooler in the summer and warmer in the winter, and it can help reduce annual weed populations that compete with desired plants for water. In addition, mulch improves a home's curb appeal by giving the landscape a polished look.

There are two categories of mulch: organic and inorganic. Each has its benefits and drawbacks. The type of mulch you choose depends on your overall garden goals.

Organic Mulch

Organic mulch is made from materials derived from living matter that will decompose over time. This type of mulch includes wood chips, bark, leaves, composted cotton burrs, and straw.

These items can be found at local garden stores. However, if you are on a tight budget, some municipalities offer free mulch at their recycling facilities. As these mulches break down, you can till the remnants back into the soil to boost its organic matter content and water holding capacity.

Composted cotton burrs are a favorite for gardeners on the South Plains because it is a locally-produced product. "Gin trash", or the hulls and stems leftover from the ginning process, can be aged and composted to begin the decomposition process. Composted cotton burrs are excellent at holding moisture.

Inorganic mulches are made from materials that do not decompose. These include crushed granite, river or lava rocks, rubber, plastic sheeting, landscape fabric, and even tumbled glass.

Depending on the type, inorganic mulches are effective in reducing soil evaporation and reducing annual weed populations. These types of mulches do not need to be replenished as frequently as organic mulches.

Rocks, crushed granite and tumbled glass are popular ways to decorate a landscape or fill landscape paths. Instead of pouring concrete or other pavement for garden paths, consider using inorganic mulches to allow water to soak into the soil instead of collecting on nonpermeable hardscapes.

As a general rule, maintain a two to four inch layer of mulch year round. Replenish organic mulches every time the garden is replanted or when the mulch layer decomposes by half. If you have a flower bed that tends to flood during rain events, explore heavier or anti-float mulches. Whichever type of mulch you use, make sure not to pile it up around the base of plants or trees.

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A layer of **ORGANIC MULCH** can help reduce the amount of moisture evaporating from the soil.

INORGANIC MULCH (granite) covers the landscape next to the rainwater harvesting system at the City of Wolfforth Public Library.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: JUNE 12, 2019

HPWD BOARD APPROVES RESEARCH & DEMONSTRATION FUNDING

LUBBOCK TX (*June 12, 2019*) – More than $157,000 in funding for water research, demonstration, and education projects was approved by the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors at their June 11 meeting.

There were 16 projects submitted for funding. Each was evaluated by an eight-member committee, consisting of three Board members, two County Advisory Committee members, two members of the public, and the General Manager.

Of these, 11 projects were approved. They are:

- Plant Based Polymers to Remove Total Dissolved Solids (TDS) and Arsenic in Groundwater.
- Rainwater Harvesting Demonstration Project.
- Evaluation of TDR Soil Moisture Sensor.
- Drought Tolerant Corn Hybrids.
- Improving Groundwater Recharge.
- Mapping Playa Wetness & Estimating Playa Recharge.
- 3D Aquifer Visualization Model.
- Water Conservation Demonstration Garden.
- Effects of Shade on Water Use in Turfgrass.
- Playa Basin Field Days & Festivals.
- Texas 4-H Water Ambassadors.

“HPWD is pleased to support these educators and researchers as they work to encourage water conservation education, promote more efficient water use, and improve crop production. Each approved project is designed to help conserve and preserve groundwater resources for the future,” said Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo.

In other business, the Board approved the Consent Agenda, approved applications for water well permits received in May 2019; received an overview of bills passed during the regular session of the 86th Texas Legislature; and heard a staff report about recent HPWD rainwater harvesting educational workshops.

The next HPWD Board of Directors meeting is set for 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, July 9, at the HPWD

call the district office at (806) 762-0181. You can also find HPWD on Facebook and Twitter.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: AUGUST 2, 2019

AUGUST IS NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MONTH

INSPECT DOMESTIC WELLS TO AVOID GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION

LUBBOCK TX (August 2, 2019) – August is National Water Quality month! High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) reminds area residents that regular inspection of domestic water wells can help preserve groundwater quality.

“We encourage domestic well owners to check their site for any openings that would allow contaminants to adversely impact groundwater quality in that individual well,” said HPWD Manager Jason Coleman, P.E.

He said well surface seals should be in good condition. If your well has a concrete slab, be sure to check for any large cracks or openings that can allow potential contaminants to enter the well.

Some wells have steel or PVC sleeves around the casing. Like a slab, this provides a proper seal between the bore hole and casing. Be sure that the sleeve fits properly and is not damaged.

Well plates should fit securely on top of the casing. There should also be a proper fit where any electrical wiring enters the well plate. This helps ensure that no debris or other contaminants fall into the well. During winter, some wells may be wrapped with insulation. Mice and other vermin may nest in it and contaminate wells that are not properly sealed.

Coleman added that soil surfaces 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 that can occur following rainfall events.

Keep the well site and surrounding areas clean. Trash and overgrown vegetation may hide problems and encourage rodent and snake activity. Do not store chemicals near wells or in well houses.

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.

In addition, Coleman says it is a good practice to have a professional laboratory test the quality of the water in your well each year. This is especially important if there is a change in the

appearance, smell, or taste of water produced from the well.

“We encourage folks to visit the domestic well page on the HPWD website (www.hpwd.org/domestic-wells). It features several fact sheets and additional online resources relating to domestic wells and groundwater quality,” he said.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: AUGUST 16, 2019

HPWD BOARD SETS SEPT. 10 PUBLIC HEARING ON MANAGEMENT PLAN

LUBBOCK TX (August 16, 2019) – The High Plains Underground Water Conservation District Board of Directors have scheduled a Sept. 10 public hearing to receive comments on the District's amended management plan.

The hearing is set for 1:30 p.m. in the A. Wayne Wyatt Board Room of the High Plains Water District (HPWD) office, 2930 Avenue Q, in Lubbock. The September Board of Directors meeting follows at 2:00 p.m.

"Groundwater conservation districts in Texas adopt 10-year management plans. However, they are required by state law to review and re-adopt these plans--with or without revisions--at least once every five years. The 2014 plan amendments are about to expire," said General Manager Jason Coleman.

Coleman said the proposed amended 2019 plan contains no major revisions.

"Basically, we are adding information required by the Texas Water Development Board and the State Legislature; updating the appendices containing Modeled Available Groundwater data resulting from 2016 adopted Desired Future Conditions (DFC); Modeled Water Budgets and Estimated Historical Groundwater Use; adding revised data from the 2017 State Water Plan; and making capitalization and grammar revisions," he said.

Persons may request a copy of the draft amended management plan by e-mail at **info@hpwd.com**. A copy is also available for public viewing during regular business hours at the district headquarters in Lubbock and the HPWD field office, 301 N 15th Street, Suite 1, in Canyon.

Written comments concerning the draft amended management plan will be accepted at the District's Lubbock office until 5 p.m., Friday, Sept. 6, 2019. They may also be submitted by email at **jason.coleman@hpwd.org**

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

AIM PROGRAM: HPWD ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS FOR COST-SHARE FUNDING

LUBBOCK (September 4, 2019) – For the next three weeks, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) is accepting applications for cost-share funding for the third round of its Assistance in Irrigation Management (AIM) program. The enrollment period ends Sept. 25.

HPWD recently received $230,000 for AIM funding through the Texas Water Development Board's Agricultural Water Conservation Grants program. This is the third year that HPWD has made these cost-share funds available to interested producers.

"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 subsurface drip irrigation system," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman.

An online application form and procedures are available at **aimapp.hpwd.org**. This website also includes a link to program terms & conditions – plus essential information to be included in the application.

"This year, the allocated cost-share funding is tied to the number of irrigated acres by county within the Water District. We will evaluate the number of applications received by county at the end of the three-week application period. Any remaining funds will be available on a first-come, first-served basis after that time," Coleman said.

More than 40 producers enrolled 18,400 acres of land during the first round of the AIM Program (2017). There were 154 telemetry-based systems deployed which resulted in 13,500 acre-inches of water saved.

Of this, Coleman said 6,372 acre-inches of water was saved when producers received notification of irrigation system malfunctions; 6,029 acre-inches was saved with use of irrigation scheduling software; and 1,093 acre-inches was saved by remotely turning off equipment in response to a rainfall alert.

"During the past two years, producers have shown a great amount of interest in using telemetry-based technology to improve their irrigation scheduling," Coleman said. "HPWD commends them for their efforts to conserve groundwater resources within the District."

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

HIGH PLAINS WATER DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT 2019 TAX RATE

LUBBOCK TX (September *12, 2019*) -- During their Sept. 10 meeting, the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors approved a resolution setting the 2019 ad valorem tax rate at $0.0063 per $100 valuation for operation and maintenance of the district.

The adopted 2019 tax rate is about 1.5 percent less than the effective tax rate. This slight reduction provides a similar amount of tax revenue as lastyear.

Persons with $100,000 in property value will pay $6.30 in annual taxes to HPWD under the approved rate, as compared to $6.70 in 2018. The HPWD 2019 fiscal year begins Oct. 1.

"The HPWD Board of Directors have lowered the tax rate each year since 2014. It is our priority to have balanced annual budgets. This allows us to reduce the tax rate for operation of the district, while at the same time, improve services for constituents in our 16-county service area," 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 2019; adopted the District's revised 10-year management plan; amended the adopted 2019 budget for the end of fiscal year; conducted annual review and adoption of the District's investment policy; and received an update on a HPWD supported rainwater harvesting project from April Riggs, Executive Director of Sharing Hope Ministries in Amarillo.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 12, 2019

HPWD BOARD OF DIRECTORS ADOPT REVISED 10-YEAR MANAGEMENT PLAN

LUBBOCK TX (*September 12, 2019*) – Following a Sept. 10 public hearing, the High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) Board of Directors unanimously approved a resolution adopting a revised 10-year management plan.

The revised plan has been submitted to the Texas Water Development Board in Austin for final certification.

“Groundwater conservation districts (GCDs) in Texas adopt 10-year management plans. However, they are required by state law to review and re-adopt these plans--with or without revisions--at least once every five years. The newly-adopted management plan covers the period from 2019 to 2024,” said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman.

He added that management plans contain specific performance standards pertaining to services provided by the respective GCDs across the state.

“As an example, groundwater conservation districts make annual water level measurements in observation wells each year. Performance standards in a district’s management plan will include the number of wells measured each year; the number of wells unable to be measured each year; the number of new wells added to the observation well network each year; and how these data are shared with the public. This helps GCDs gauge the effectiveness of programs and activities they provide to their constituents,” Coleman said.

The amended 2019-2024 HPWD management plan is available for viewing at www.hpwd.org/rules

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HIGH PLAINS UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: OCTOBER 29, 2019

ALL FUNDING CLAIMED FOR 2019 HIGH PLAINS WATER DISTRICT AIM PROGRAM

LUBBOCK TX (*October 29, 2019*) – All funding for the third round of High Plains Underground Water Conservation District's (HPWD) Assistance in Irrigation Management (AIM) Program has been claimed. This follows a three-week application period, which ended Sept. 25.

AIM is a voluntary program to assist producers with the purchase of telemetry-based irrigation monitoring systems used with either a center pivot system or subsurface drip irrigation.

HPWD received $230,000 for AIM funding through the Texas Water Development Board's Agricultural Water Conservation Grants Program. This is the third year that HPWD has made these cost-share funds available to interested producers.

"This year, the allocated cost-share funding was tied to the number of irrigated acres by county within the Water District service area. HPWD staff evaluated the applications received from each county at the end of the three-week application period. Funding from several counties that did not use the full allocation was transferred to applications on a first-come, first-served basis after that time," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman.

During the past two years, Coleman said producers have shown great interest in using telemetry-based technology to improve their irrigation scheduling.

"HPWD commends them for their efforts to conserve groundwater resources within the District," he said.

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HIGH PLAINS UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

News Release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: NOVEMBER 26, 2019

DOCKUM AQUIFER STUDY RESULTS TO BE DISCUSSED DEC. 5 IN CANYON

LUBBOCK TX (*November 26, 2019*) – Findings from the Summer 2019 High Plains Water District (HPWD) Dockum Aquifer study will be presented at a Dec. 5 public meeting at West Texas A&M University in Canyon. It begins at 11:00 a.m. in Room 104 of the Agricultural Sciences Complex, located at 600 WTAMU Drive. All interested persons are invited to attend.

Lunch will be served following the meeting. Please RSVP at victoria.whitehead@hpwd.org no later than December 2.

During the meeting, HPWD staff will provide an overview of the District's ongoing Dockum Aquifer study. In addition, 2019 water level data, flow test results, water quality logging results, and water quality results will be discussed.

Since 2015, HPWD has studied groundwater quality and quantity in the Dockum Aquifer, which lies beneath the Ogallala Formation in the Panhandle-South Plains area.

Generally, groundwater in the Dockum Aquifer is of better quality in the northern HPWD service area. Dockum wells have been used for many years to supply water for irrigation, livestock, oilfield purposes, and some municipal supplies. In these instances, very little water treatment is needed. However, this groundwater becomes deeper and more brackish in southern portions of the district. As a result, more extensive treatment is needed to improve water quality.

"As water levels in the Ogallala Aquifer decline, many landowners have expressed interest in using the Dockum as a possible alternative water supply," said HPWD General Manager Jason Coleman. "Our goal is to gain a better understanding of the geology and hydrology of this groundwater resource for our constituents."

The HPWD study includes geophysical logging of Dockum wells, establishment of a Dockum water level observation well network, use of pressure transducers to monitor depth-to-water levels in select Dockum wells, and providing cost-share assistance to communities wanting to drill test wells into the Dockum Aquifer. HPWD has partnered with the Cities of Abernathy, Lubbock, and Wolfforth on test well projects.

"We believe it is the Water District's obligation to assist communities in their efforts to learn more about the Dockum Aquifer. During the past few years, we have obtained valuable data from this study. The Board wants to share this information with the public whenever possible," said HPWD Board President Lynn Tate of Amarillo.

HPWD did not require permitting and spacing of Dockum Aquifer wells until Jan. 2009.

“The Board of Directors is interested in knowing how this process is working for those interested in drilling Dockum wells on their property. We would value such feedback at the Dec. 5 meeting,” said Coleman.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: DECEMBER 20, 2019

ANNUAL WATER LEVEL MEASUREMENTS BEGIN JANUARY 2, 2020

LUBBOCK TX -- (December 20, 2019) -- Beginning Jan. 2, High Plains Underground Water Conservation District (HPWD) personnel will begin annual water level measurements to determine the effect of 2019 pumping on groundwater levels in aquifers within the district.

These measurements are made in a network of more than 1,350 privately-owned wells. These observation wells are spaced at a density of approximately one well per nine square miles throughout the 16-county HPWD service area.

“We want the public to know that our staff will be visiting observation well sites from early January until completion of this work effort. They are driving pickup trucks which are clearly identified as High Plains 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 utilize this feature to obtain depth-to-water and saturated thickness information,” Coleman said.

An introduction to the interactive map and discussion of each of its features are included in tutorial videos posted to the HPWD YouTube channel.

Those without computer access are encouraged to contact Jed Leibbrandt at the HPWD office to request a printed report of annual water level measurement data for a county or counties of interest. He may be reached at (806) 762-0181.

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An E-Line is used to make a depth-to-water level measurement in an observation well located within the 16-county HPWD service area.