



DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

RICK PERRY
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VACANT
Council Chairperson

May 13, 2010

TO: The Honorable Rick Perry, Governor, State of Texas
The Honorable David Dewhurst, Lieutenant Governor, State of Texas
Ms. Esperanza Andrade, Secretary of State, State of Texas
The Honorable Robert Duncan, President Pro-Tempore of the Senate, State of Texas
The Honorable Joe Straus, Speaker of the House, State of Texas
The Honorable Steve Ogden, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable Kip Averitt, Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable John Carona, Chairman, Senate Committee on Transportation & Homeland Security, State of Texas
The Honorable Jim Pitts, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable Allan Ritter, Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable Yvonne Gonzalez-Tourelles, Chairman, House Agriculture & Livestock Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable Pete Gallego, Chairman, House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee, State of Texas
Mr. Ray Sullivan, Chief of Staff, Office of the Governor
Mr. Josh Havens, Texas Governor's Office of Homeland Security

FROM: Deputy Assistant Director Russ Lecklider, Texas Division of Emergency Management

SUBJECT: Statewide Drought Situation Report

Chairman - Vacant
Texas Division of Emergency Mgmt

Lance Williams, Member
Texas Department of Agriculture

Carla Baze, Member
Texas Department of Transportation

Chris Loft, Member
Texas Commission on Environmental
Quality

Michael Dunivan, Member
Texas Forest Service

John Sutton, Member
Texas Water Development Board

Dr. Travis Miller, Member
Texas Cooperative Extension

David A. Van Dresar, Member
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts

Thomas Walker, Member
Office of the Governor
Economic Development & Tourism

Gus Garcia, Member
Texas Department of Rural Affairs

Richard Egg, Member
State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Cindy Loeffler, Member
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Suzanne Burnham, Member
Texas Department of State Health Services

Dr. John W. Nielsen-Gammon, Member
Office of the State Climatologist

Marisa Callan
Texas Department of Housing and
Community Affairs

1. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING

June 10, 2010 at 2:00 p.m., Audit & Inspection Conference Room, Texas Department of Public Safety Headquarters, Building A, 5805 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

Precipitation across Texas in April 2010 may be summarized as “above normal” in the western half of the state and “below normal” in the eastern half of Texas. More specifically, most of Southeast Texas received less than an inch of precipitation during April. The lack of rainfall was especially troublesome because the region generally receives 4 to 5 inches of precipitation each month during the springtime. Compounding the dryness in Southeast Texas are the normal issues of increased water usage and increased soil evaporation rates that occur each April. At the end of April, the United States Drought Monitor (USDM) classified southern Jasper and Newton counties as “Moderate Drought” (D1) areas and the rest of Southeast Texas as “Abnormally Dry” (D0).

As of May 11th, Port Arthur had received less than half an inch of rainfall. In the past 45 days, rainfall totals were approximately 6% of normal for this period. For the month of April, Port Arthur received 0.37 inches (10% of normal), College Station received 1.11 inches (35% of normal), Galveston received 0.94 inches (37% of normal), and Houston received 2.81 inches (78% of normal).

In Southeast Texas, May is climatologically the wettest month of the year from precipitation sources outside of tropical storms and hurricanes. Additionally, high temperatures by the end of May are normally near 90 degrees, and are typically warmer in the absence of any significant moisture. Therefore, an extended period of dryness in May would likely lead to a significant expansion of drought from east to west, increasing the classification of drought severity.

The abnormal dryness (D0) on the May 4th USDM depiction extends as far north as Marion County in Northeast Texas and as far west as Burleson County in Central Texas. Drought concerns are not overwhelming in Northeast Texas because precipitation over the last half of 2009 was so abundant, with widespread monthly precipitation totals of 15 to 20 inches in October. In South Central Texas, however, east of an Austin-to-Brownsville line, radar estimates indicate precipitation was only 50%-75% of normal. Despite much-needed, abundant winter precipitation in this region, long-term deficits (18-24 months) are still substantial and the drought situation in South Central Texas bears monitoring.

El Nino conditions are expected to transition to ENSO-neutral (neither El Nino nor La Nina) conditions by June, according to the Climate Prediction Center (CPC). The current one-month forecast calls for equal chances of above-normal, below-normal, and near-normal precipitation northeast of a Midland-to-Victoria line. A 33-40% chance of below-normal precipitation is forecast for the Trans Pecos, Edwards Plateau, South Texas, and Lower Valley regions. The exceptions are the southern Trans Pecos, southwestern Edwards Plateau, and northwestern South Texas regions, which have a 40-50% chance of below-normal precipitation.

The three-month forecast by the CPC, which is valid for May through July 2010, calls for equal chances of above-normal, below-normal, and near-normal precipitation in the Trans Pecos, East Texas, Upper Coast, South Central Texas, South Texas, and Lower Valley regions of Texas. A 33-40% chance of above-normal precipitation is forecast across the southwestern Panhandle, the Edwards Plateau, and North Central Texas, with a 40-50% chance of above-normal precipitation in the rest of the Panhandle and in the Low Rolling Plains. The CPC seasonal drought outlook indicates the likely development and intensification of drought conditions in Southeast Texas.

3. OVERALL STATEWIDE DROUGHT CONDITIONS

During the month of April, Texas remained in “Normal” to “Wet” conditions, as indicated by PDSI, SPI, and SFI indices, but a few regions were listed as “Slightly Dry,” according to the Crop Moisture Index (CMI).

The Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI) reported that all climate regions were in “Wet” conditions, with six regions described as “Very Wet” or “Extremely Wet.”

The Crop Moisture Index (CMI) listed five climate regions in “Slightly Dry” condition.

The Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) showed eight of 10 climate regions in “Wet” conditions and the rest at “Normal” condition.

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) depicted two regions as “Above Average” fire risk, one more than last month. The Trans-Pecos region fire risk was ranked “High,” and the Upper Coast region was listed as “Above Average.”

The Stream Flow Index (SFI) showed all regions at either “Near Normal” or at “High Flow” conditions.

4. WATER UTILITY STATUS

May 2010 began with 174 public water systems on the drought list. Of this total, 115 have removed all watering restrictions, 38 are asking customers to adhere to a mandatory outside watering schedule based on address and day of the week, and 21 are asking customers to voluntarily limit water usage and avoid waste. Rainfall events have diminished, and water systems are being proactive in planning for hot, dry weather. This will result in more watering awareness information being provided to customers.

5. WATER RIGHTS – STATEWIDE

Applications for new water-use permits and amendments to existing permits remained normal for the month. Beginning April 1 and continuing through the end of August, water rights in the Brazos River Basin containing Hale Clause restrictions were once again implemented. Owners of water rights with these restrictions are required to call the “Hale Clause Hotline” on a weekly basis to determine if the diversion of water is allowed for their respective permits. The availability of non-appropriated water for new water-use permits continues to decrease in all river basins in the State, and the search for long-term, dependable alternate sources of water remains a high-priority issue.

6. WATER RIGHTS – LOWER RIO GRANDE / RIO GRANDE WATERMASTER (RGWM)

Current Conditions: As of May 1, 2010, the U.S. combined ownership at Amistad/Falcon stands at 84.27% of conservation capacity, impounding 2,858,563 acre-feet, down from 88.62% of conservation capacity, impounding 3,231,490 acre-feet a year ago at this time. Overall, the system is holding 86.41% of conservation capacity, impounding 5,118,012 acre-feet, with Amistad at 96.66% of conservation capacity, impounding 3,166,633 acre-feet. Falcon is at 73.72% of conservation capacity, impounding 1,951,379 acre-feet. Mexico has 89.27% of the water available for storage at Amistad/Falcon.

Allocations: At the time of printing of the March ownership report, the U.S. had allocated 149,764,211 acre-feet to Class A & B water rights, which includes irrigation, mining and recreation. The U.S. has an amount in excess of 116,642 acre-feet for future allocations in 2010.

Storage & Loss Amistad vs. Falcon: The U.S. is currently storing approximately 1.76 million acre-feet at Amistad (95.7%) and approximately 1.1 million acre-feet at Falcon (70.7%).

Releases to Meet Demands: To date in 2010, Mexico had released 116,424 acre-feet from Amistad and 74,262 acre-feet from Falcon for Mexico's needs. The U.S. released 192,127 acre-feet from Falcon and 242,241 acre-feet from Amistad for U.S. needs. Combined with gains between Amistad and Falcon, U.S. inflows to Falcon totaled 304,296 acre-feet. The U.S. demand in the lower Rio Grande has been met at a rate of 158% by direct Rio Grande inflows and Amistad releases this year.

Upper Rio Grande (New Mexico): Elephant Butte in New Mexico is currently at 27.2% of capacity, storing 551,282 acre-feet, and Caballo Dam in New Mexico, downstream of Elephant Butte, is at 31.1% of capacity, storing 70,532 acre-feet. This water storage, in part, is used to meet water needs in the El Paso area.

Outlook: To help alleviate losses in Falcon, the U.S. will continue to monitor ownership and elevations levels in both Falcon and Amistad so that U.S. transfers of water from Amistad to Falcon may be most efficient. There are still some dry areas in and around the Fabens area, but the Rio Grande Basin is completely out of drought conditions, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The region did not receive much rain during the past month. However, the little that fell resulted in a decreased demand for water in the Rio Grande Valley.

7. SOUTH TEXAS WATERMASTER – GUADALUPE / LAVACA / SAN ANTONIO / NUECES REGION

The South Central Texas and Concho areas continued to receive showers throughout the month of April. The U.S. Drought Monitor does not show any current drought conditions in this area. Most area lakes have had significant increases due to the recent rains.

Area Counties: Bee, Goliad, Victoria, Calhoun, Refugio, Aransas, San Patricio, Nueces, Kleberg, Jim Wells, Duval, Live Oak, Kenedy, Willacy, Brooks, and Jim Hogg

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received some rainfall during the month of April. Some areas received only scattered rain showers while other areas received up to six inches or more. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates that the counties in this area are not experiencing any drought conditions at this time. Most of the surface water diversions in this area continue to be for municipal and industrial use with little irrigation use being noted.

Approximate Stream flow Conditions:

Site	April Beginning flows CFS	April Ending Flows CFS*	April Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
Guadalupe River near Victoria	1,550.0	1,940.0	2,610.0
San Antonio River near Goliad	540.0	757.0	1,070.0
San Antonio River at McFaddin below Goliad	575.0	639.0	452.0
Guadalupe River near Tivoli	2,880.0	3,100.0	2,280.0
Mission River near Refugio	22.0	34.0	138.0
Nueces River at Calallen Dam	0.0	0.20	535.0
Aransas River near Skidmore	5.9	8.0	11.0

* USGS Gauge values obtained on 04/30/10

Stream flows of the Guadalupe River continue to flow over the “saltwater barrier” near Tivoli, Texas.

Corpus Christi Reservoir System: The Corpus Christi Reservoir System continued to receive inflows for the month of April and the level of the reservoir system has risen significantly. On April 30, 2010, the Corpus Christi Reservoir System was at 87.4% of capacity, impounding 832,920 acre-feet, compared to 70.1% of capacity, impounding 668,154 acre-feet, at this time last year.

The Choke Canyon level has risen to 86.5% of capacity, impounding 601,734 acre-feet, compared to 76.5% of capacity, impounding 531,958 acre-feet, at this time last year. Lake Corpus Christi also has risen to 89.9% of capacity, impounding 231,186 acre-feet, compared to 52.9% of capacity, impounding 136,196 acre-feet, at this time last year. The City of Corpus Christi continues to divert much of its monthly water supply needs from Lake Texana.

Drought Restrictions: There are no permits being restricted due to drought conditions in this area.

Area Counties: Atascosa, Karnes, Gonzales, Wilson, McMullen, Dewitt, Guadalupe, Lavaca, Fayette, Colorado, Wharton, and Jackson

Rainfall and Area Conditions: The southernmost portions of this area received 1.5 to 12 inches of rainfall for the month of April, while the eastern portions of the area, including the

Lavaca area, received 1.5 to 3.5 inches. Irrigation activity is minimal at this time, but, without adequate rainfall in the month of May, likely will increase in the near future. Lake Texana is at 94% of capacity, 43.03 ft. above mean sea level. In March of last year, Lake Texana was at 74% of capacity. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, this area is experiencing no drought conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions:

Site	April Beginning flows CFS	April Ending flows CFS	April Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
San Antonio River near Falls City	375.00	488.00	562.00
Cibolo Creek near Falls City	73.00	63.00	190.00
Guadalupe River near Gonzales	1,470.00	2,190.00	1,530.00
Lavaca River at Edna	116.00	84.00	343.00
Navidad River near Hallettsville	31.00	34.00	170.00
Atascosa River near Whitsett	17.00	39.00	256.00
Frio River near Tilden	2.50	35.00	267.00
Nueces River near Tilden	.51	135.00	636.00

Drought Restrictions: There are no permits being restricted due to drought conditions in this area.

Area Counties: Bandera, Blanco, Comal, Kendall and Kerr Counties

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received scattered rainfall ranging from 3 to 8 inches during the month of April. The Texas Crop Moisture Index indicates this area of the hill country is classified as “Slightly Dry” to “Favorably Moist.” The majority of surface water diversions in this area are for municipal and industrial uses, with a few surface-water permit holders irrigating hay and sod fields. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates the area is currently experiencing “No Drought” conditions.

Stream flow Conditions:

Site	April Beginning flows CFS	April Ending flows CFS*	April Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
Guadalupe River at Kerrville	90	211	119
Guadalupe River at Comfort	198	397	234
Medina River at Bandera	137	356	130

* USGS Gauge value of 04/30/10

During April, this area received above-normal rains that caused some flooding of local streams. The Medina River at Bandera crested at 19,000 CFS, the Guadalupe River at

Kerrville crested at 30,700 CFS, and the Guadalupe River crested at 30,500 CFS at Comfort. Major streams and their tributaries are all currently flowing above their historical averages. With the recent rains, the Guadalupe, Medina, and Sabinal Rivers have shown an increase in flows and are flowing above their monthly average for April.

Drought Restrictions: There are no restrictions on permits in this area. The City of Kerrville’s full diversion rates from the Guadalupe River, under their various permits, were restored on April 20, 2010. Temporary water rights issued in the San Antonio River Basin (above Lake Medina), and the Guadalupe River Basin (above Canyon Lake) are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Area Counties: Edwards, Real, Kinney, Uvalde, Zavala, Dimmit, La Salle, and Webb

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received much-needed, significant rainfall during the month of April. Heavy rain showers were reported throughout the entire month. The range of rainfall in the area was 2 to 10 inches. Most diversions of surface water were for irrigational uses, with a lesser amount for industrial uses. Crops being irrigated in the area include wheat, onions, corn, cabbage, hay grazers, and pecans. Soil conditions are good due to the rainfall for this area, and the U.S. Drought Monitor indicates the area is experiencing “Normal” conditions.

Stream flow Conditions:

Site	April Beginning flows CFS	April Ending flows CFS	April Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
Nueces River at Laguna	87.00	199.00	148.00
Nueces River near Brackettville	.20	1.40	8.30
Nueces River below Uvalde	8.30	12.00	69.00
Frio River at Concan	59.00	167.00	123.00
Sabinal River at Sabinal	.87	17.00	18.00
Leona River near Uvalde	4.50	2.60	35.00

Drought Restrictions: Currently, one permit with stream-flow restrictions has been restricted. Permits that haven’t met stream flow restrictions are being regulated. The Zavala/Dimmit Water District restricted all diversions to ensure adequate water for domestic and livestock use. The Zavala/Dimmit Water District is allowing permit holders on the Espantosa Reservoir to divert at this time. Temporary Permits are restricted on the Nueces and Leona Rivers.

Area Counties: Bastrop, Bexar, Blanco, Caldwell, Comal, Fayette, Frio, Guadalupe, Hays, and Medina

Rainfall and Area Conditions: Continued widespread rain fell across the San Antonio Regional Area throughout the month of April. Month-to-date rainfall measured at the San Antonio International Airport was 3.48 inches. The average precipitation for April is 2.60

inches. The total year-to-date precipitation is 14.46 inches. The normal year-to-date precipitation is 7.81 inches. The U.S. Drought Monitor, dated April 27, 2010, indicates the San Antonio Regional Area is experiencing no drought conditions at this time. Ground moisture is "Fair" to "Good," however, with warming temperatures and longer days, additional rainfall will be needed in the short term to give spring crops a good start. Currently, corn, milo, green beans, squash, peas, tomatoes, wheat, and hay grazers are being planted.

Stream flow Conditions: The San Marcos and Blanco Rivers are beginning to gradually drop below their historical mean stream flows for April. The Guadalupe River is still above the historical mean flow for April. Additionally, small creeks are beginning to cease flowing. Municipal use has increased due to residential lawn irrigation, and industrial use remains constant.

Site	April Starting flows CFS	April Ending flows CFS*	April Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
Guadalupe River at Spring Branch	355	652	386
San Marcos River at Luling	549	394	470
Blanco River at Wimberley	194	139	177

**USGS Gauge Value for 04/30/2010*

As of April 29, 2010, Canyon Lake Reservoir was at 909.91 feet elevation and 100.00% of capacity, impounding 378,781 acre-feet. Lake Medina Reservoir was at 57.34% of capacity, impounding 146,117 acre-feet. On May 3, 2010, the Edwards Aquifer level at the J17 well in Bexar County was 680.1 feet. The historical monthly average for the J17 well in April is 666.3 feet. On May 2, 2010, the San Marcos Springs were flowing at 245 CFS. The historical monthly average for the San Marcos Springs in April is 181 CFS. On May 2, 2010, the Comal Springs were flowing at 349.0 CFS. The historical monthly average for the Comal Springs in April is 297.8 CFS.

Drought Restrictions: There are no permits being restricted due to drought conditions in this area.

Area Counties: Sterling, Tom Green, Irion, Concho, Coke, Glasscock, Runnels, Reagan, and Schleicher.

Rainfall and Area Conditions: Rainfall in San Angelo for the month was 2.46 inches. Areas surrounding San Angelo received slightly higher rainfall amounts. The average rainfall amount for the month of April is 1.84 inches. The total amount of rainfall for the year is 8.49 inches. In 2009, the area received 1.73 inches of rain for the month of April. Area reservoirs are showing a slight increase in the amount of storage from the previous month's amounts. The Texas Crop Moisture Index indicates the area as having "Abnormally Moist" soil conditions. Wheat, corn and maize have been planted and are established. There are adequate supplies of surface water in the area at this time.

The Concho River Valley received an above-average amount of rainfall for the month of April. The State Drought Monitor Index indicates the Concho Valley as having no drought conditions.

Stream flow Conditions: Lake Nasworthy is at 82% of capacity, impounding 8,372 acre-feet, with O.C. Fisher is at 3% of capacity, impounding 3,794 acre-feet. Twin Buttes Lake is at 27% of capacity, impounding 50,345 acre-feet.

Site	April Beginning Flows CFS	April Ending Flows CFS	Historical Mean Flows
Concho Watermaster			
Spring Creek above Twin Buttes Reservoir	11.00	11.00	13.25
Concho River at San Angelo and Bell St.	16.00	15.00	84.10
South Concho at Christoval	16.00	16.00	26.50

Drought Restrictions: There are no permits being restricted due to drought conditions in this area.

8. UPPER COLORADO (Concho River watershed not included)

The upper Colorado River area received above-normal precipitation during April. The National Weather Service in San Angelo reported monthly precipitation of 2.65 inches, 1.05 inches above normal. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, there are no drought conditions indicated in the area. USGS gauges indicate there is predominately less-than-normal flow in the upper reaches of the Colorado River as far south as Ballinger. The San Saba River is flowing significantly higher than the USGS long-term median in the upper reach in Menard, TX to the lower reach of the river in San Saba, TX. The North Llano River and the Llano River at Junction and Mason, TX are flowing significantly higher than the USGS long-term median. The pool level of E.V. Spence Reservoir has increased slightly, while the pool level of O.H. Ivie Reservoir decreased slightly. The pool levels are 4.8% and 42.8% of capacity, respectively.

9. TEXAS PANHANDLE AND SOUTHERN HIGH PLAINS

Amarillo Area: The National Weather Service in Amarillo recorded a total rainfall in April 2010 of 4.89 inches, 2.43 above the monthly average. Total year-to-date rainfall is 7.12 inches, 3.48 inches above the average.

Lake Greenbelt began the month of April at 52.34 feet and ended at 53.75 feet. Lake Mackenzie began the month of April at 70.18 feet and ended at 75.32 feet. Lake Meredith began the month of April at 46.33 feet and ended at 46.31 feet.

Lubbock Area: Lubbock received 4.65 inches of precipitation during the month of April. The average rainfall for April is 1.23 inches. Similar amounts were recorded throughout the South Plains area. Since January 1, 2010, Lubbock has received a total of 10.69 inches of precipitation, 7.49 inches above normal for this point in the year. The long-term drought situation has not changed. All of the communities previously noted as being on mandatory water restrictions remained on those restrictions. No new communities were added to the water restrictions list during April and none were removed.

The City of Lubbock and the City of Amherst remained on mandatory drought restriction status. The City of Ralls, City of Crosbyton, City of Spur, City of Post, White River Municipal Water District (MWD), and Valley Water Supply Corporation (WSC) in the South Plains area remained on voluntary drought restriction status.

White River Lake: The lake pool elevation is 21.6 feet below full capacity, a rise of 2.5 feet from the end of March 2010.

Lake Alan Henry: The lake pool elevation is completely full and flowing over the spillway, a rise of 5 feet from the end of March 2010. The City of Lubbock began construction on a new water pipeline between Lake Alan Henry and the City of Lubbock on March 23, 2010. The plans are to have the pipeline laid and a new surface water treatment plant constructed in Lubbock sometime during 2012.

10. WILDLIFE CONCERNS

No information was received by the time of this report.

11. AGRICULTURE CONCERNS

Agriculture in Texas is still recovering from an unusually cool and wet winter. Many ranchers are reporting the slow recovery and growth of pasture grasses and hay meadows, which were damaged by winter weather, a prolonged, cool spring, and injury from the drought in 2009. These cool, wet conditions also led to generally late planting of field crops. Overall moisture conditions across the state are described as “good” to “excellent” due to the winter and spring moisture, although abnormally dry conditions are prevailing in parts of East Texas and the Upper Coast.

Texas has the potential for an excellent wheat crop, with a statewide report of a crop condition of 77% of normal, compared to a very short crop in 2009, rated at 25% of normal on the same date.

The following are comments from AgriLife Extension field reporters on the agricultural situation for the week of April 25 to May 1:

Central: Native warm-season grasses were off to a good start. Coastal Bermudagrass fields were a little behind due to cool nights. Last year's drought appears to have weakened root systems, but this should improve with consistently warm nights and days.

Coastal Bend: There was no significant rainfall, which allowed field activities such as fertilizer applications, cultivation and replanting. Some areas are in need of rain to make good crops. Pastures continued to improve and livestock were in good condition.

East: Despite forecasts for heavy rains, many counties received only scattered showers. Henderson County was one exception, as the county was declared a disaster area due to 2 inches of rain and extensive storm damage. Winds and warm days contributed to dry soils in other counties, and much more rain is needed to boost crop and grass growth. Livestock were reported to be in fair to good condition.

Far West: High winds were prevalent during April. Farmers were preparing to plant cotton. Most wheat was being cut for hay. A few of the irrigated wheat fields are almost ready to be cut for grain. Rangeland was in fair condition. There was a high danger of wildfire.

North: Soil moisture was adequate. Drier weather allowed field work to continue and benefited corn, sorghum and wheat. What corn was planted emerged and was growing well, due primarily to the recent rains and warmer temperatures. Growers were planting grain sorghum and a few acres of soybeans, well beyond the normal planting date of early to mid-April. Corn, sorghum, and soybeans were in good condition. Wheat was in fair to good condition. The planting of cotton and peanut was ongoing. Rice was in good condition. Bermudagrass growth was slowed by cooler-than-average temperatures, but pastures were improving rapidly as winter annuals, primarily ryegrass, greened up. Hay production was going into full swing. Livestock were in fair to good condition. Sweet potato growers were preparing fields for planting.

Panhandle: During April, strong winds began to dry out the topsoil. On the positive side, this allowed producers to get into the fields to catch up on planting corn and to prepare to plant sorghum, cotton and peanuts. Wheat continued to develop and was in fair to good condition. About 2 percent of corn already planted had emerged. Rangeland grass growth was underway and was expected to provide good spring grazing for livestock.

Rolling Plains: Although high winds dried out wheat somewhat, the crop still looked very promising and made excellent progress. Rust was present but not at serious levels. Some wheat and oat fields were harvested for hay with good yields and quality. Alfalfa growers were beginning to take their first cutting. Producers prepared fields to plant cotton, sorghum and sesame as quickly as possible in order to take advantage of the excellent subsoil moisture. Peanut producers were already planting, though cotton producers will have to wait for warmer soil temperatures. Stocker cattle were getting fat on wheat pasture, and cow-calf pairs were recovering from a long winter on lush spring pastures. Pastures looked excellent, and livestock were in good to excellent condition.

South: Warmer temperatures and adequate soil-moisture conditions persisted throughout the week-long reporting period. There was no rain, and temperatures climbed into the upper 80s and lower 90s. Rangeland and pastures benefited from the combination of the earlier, continuous rain and warmer temperatures of the last week. In the northern part of the region, corn and sorghum fields were developing well. Early-planted cotton emerged. Potatoes were almost ready to be harvested, and producers began cutting and bailing hay. Wheat and oat fields were turning color. The crop situation in the eastern part of the region improved, with the exception of grain sorghum which remained yellowed from weeks of excessive moisture. As heat units began to accumulate, cotton growth was good, and growers resumed the cabbage harvest. In the western counties, wheat harvesting in early-planted fields was ongoing, and onions were progressing well following irrigation. Also in that area, growers were irrigating corn, sorghum, watermelons and spring cabbage. In the southernmost part of the region, growers were harvesting vegetables and sugarcane, while the citrus harvest wound down. Livestock producers found they could reduce supplemental feeding of cattle to a minimum due to light stocking and improved forage growth for grazing. Most livestock were in fair to good condition with body condition scores improving significantly.

Southeast: The region received little to no measurable precipitation, and winds dried out topsoils. Ryegrass was maturing quickly and being harvested for hay in some counties. Pastures were in fair to good shape, but warm-season perennial grasses were slow to come on because of damage from last year's drought and a colder-than-normal winter. Growers continued to plant rice.

South Plains: The region had cool nights and windy days that dried out surface soils. Warmer soil temperatures were needed for planting. Soil moisture was adequate, and producers continued to apply pesticides and prepare fields for planting. Wheat was in fair to good condition and was heading. Pastures and rangeland were in good condition and continued to improve. Livestock were in good conditions.

Southwest: April rainfall was about 85 percent of the long-term average, but year-to-date accumulation total remained above normal. Damage reports from the previous week's hail storms and high winds noted injury to onions and wheat, and some center-pivot irrigation systems were blown over. It was still too early, however, to fully assess the extent of the damage, but, with the exception of hail damage to onions, it appears that crop loss will be minor. Wheat was starting to dry and high humidity levels encouraged rust and other fungal diseases. Growers expected to begin harvesting wheat in 1-2 weeks. Forage availability was above average. Livestock and wildlife made full use of the improved forage availability. The cabbage and broccoli harvest was ongoing. Potatoes made excellent progress, and growers planned to begin planting peanuts as soon as fields dried out.

West Central: The region had warm windy days and cool nights. Producers were cutting and baling some small-grain fields for hay. Cotton growers were preparing fields for planting, but actual plantings were pending warmer temperatures. Producers were waiting for wheat to mature for harvesting. Crop growth was slowed by the cool nights. Rangeland and pastures looked very good and continued to improve. Warm-season grasses had more weeds to compete with than was average for this time of the year. Livestock were in good to excellent condition. Spring cattle work continued. Pecan growers were spraying and fertilizing orchards.

12. WILDFIRE CONCERNS

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is used to help determine potential for fire risk. It is a numerical index where each number is an estimate of the amount of precipitation, in 100ths of an inch, needed to bring the soil back to saturation. The index ranges from 0 to 800, with 0 representing a saturated soil, and 800 a completely dry soil. The relationship of the KBDI to fire danger is, as the index increases, the vegetation is subjected to increased moisture stress. KBDI levels and its relationship to expected fire potential are reflected in the following:

KBDI = 0 – 200: Soil moisture and large class fuel moistures are high and do not contribute much to fire intensity. This is typical of spring dormant season following winter precipitation.

KBDI = 201 – 400: Typical of late spring; early growing season. Lower litter and duff layers are drying and beginning to contribute to fire intensity.

KBDI = 401 – 600: Typical of late summer, early fall. Lower litter and duff layers contribute to fire intensity and will burn actively.

KBDI = 601 – 800: Often associated with more severe drought and increased wildfire occurrence. Intense, deep-burning fires with significant downwind spotting can be expected. Live fuels can also be expected to burn actively at these levels.

As of April 30, 2010, there were 23 counties (illustrated in Attachment 2) with KBDI values in excess of 400. The values indicate areas within these counties are beginning to experience or sustain dry conditions which could result in an increased fire risk potential.

The Drought Preparedness Council is composed of state agencies concerned with the effects of drought and fire on the citizens of the State of Texas. The attached information was compiled and provided by representatives listed below. Points of contact, telephone numbers, and web site addresses are also provided.

Johnna Cantrell, Texas Division of Emergency Management, (512) 424-2453, fax (512) 424-2444, web site: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem>

John Sutton, Texas Water Development Board, (512) 463-7988, fax (512) 463-9893, web site: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us>

Chris Loft, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, (512) 239-4715, fax (512) 239-4770, web site: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us>

Richard Egg, Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board, (254) 773-2250, fax (254) 773-3311, web site: <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us>

Lance Williams, Texas Department of Agriculture, (512) 463-3285, fax (800) 835-2981, web site: <http://agr.state.tx.us>

Dr. Travis Miller, Texas AgriLife Extension Service, (979) 845-4808, fax (979) 845-0456, web site: <http://texasextension.tamu.edu>

Cindy Loeffler, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, (512) 912-7015, fax (512) 707-1358, web site: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us>

Carla Baze, Texas Department of Transportation, (512) 416-3270, fax (512) 416-2941, web site: <http://www.txdot.state.tx.us>

Michael Dunivan, Texas Forest Service, (830) 997-5426, web site: <http://txforests.tamu.edu>

Suzanne Burnham, Texas Department of State Health Services, (512) 801-9816, fax (512) 458-7111, web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>

Thomas Walker, Office of the Governor, Economic Development & Tourism, (512) 936-0169, fax (512) 936-0141, web site: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev>

David A. Van Dresar, Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts, (979) 968-3135, fax (979) 968-3194, web site: <http://www.texasgroundwater.org/>

Dr. John W. Nielsen-Gammon, Office of the State Climatologist, (979) 862-2248, fax (979) 862-4466, web site: <http://www.met.tamu.edu/osc/>

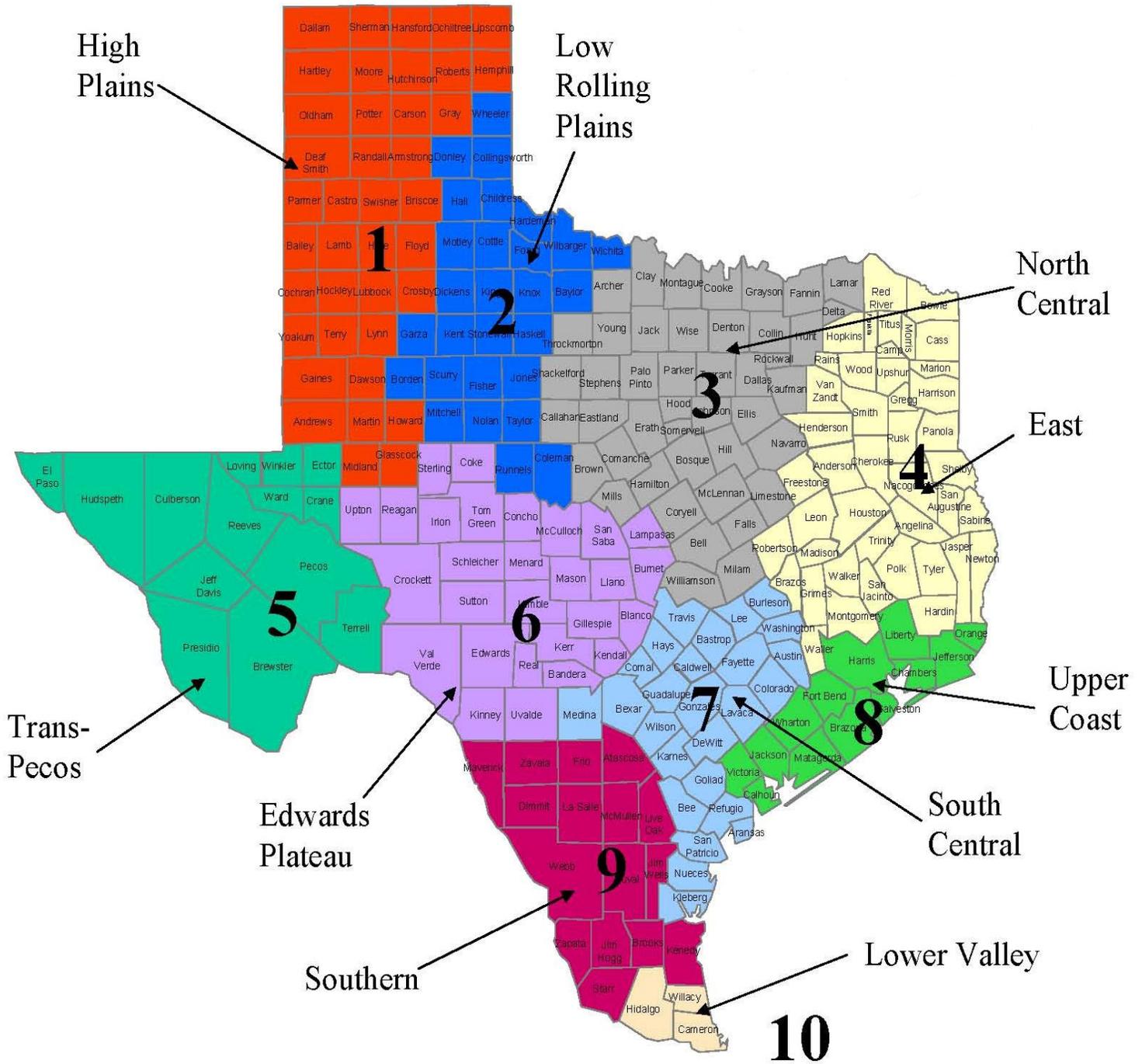
Gus Garcia, Texas Department of Rural Affairs, (512) 936-7876, fax (512) 936-6776, web site: <http://www.tdra.state.tx.us>

Marisa Callan, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, (512) 475-3964, website: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

cc:

Amy Jeter, Committee Clerk, Senate Finance Committee
Sarah Hicks, Committee Director, Senate Finance Committee
Teddy Carter, Committee Clerk, Senate Natural Resources Committee
Amy Peterson, Committee Clerk, House Appropriations
Elizabeth Fazio, Committee Clerk, House Natural Resources Committee
Jim Terrell, Committee Clerk, House Agriculture and Livestock Committee
Andrew Cates, Committee Clerk, House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee
Zak Covar, Policy Advisor for TCEQ Issues, Governor's Policy Office
Auburn Mitchell, Policy Advisor for Agriculture/TDA, Governor's Policy Office
Carmen Cernosek, Lt. Governor's Natural Resources Policy Analyst
Shane Linkous, Deputy Division Chief, Intergovernmental Relations, Attorney
General's Office
Allan B. Polunsky, Chairman, Public Safety Commission
C. Tom Clowe, Jr., Member, Public Safety Commission
Ada Brown, Member, Public Safety Commission
John Steen, Member, Public Safety Commission
Carin Marcy Barth, Member, Public Safety Commission
Steven McCraw, Director, Department of Public Safety
Lt. Colonel Lamar Beckworth, Deputy Director, Department of Public Safety
Lori Gabbert,, Budget Analyst, Legislative Budget Board (LBB-DPS)
Tom Lambert, Budget Analyst, Legislative Budget Board (LBB-TCEQ)
Ed Perez, Executive Director, Texas Office of State-Federal Relations,
Washington, DC
Brandon Steinmann, Director, Texas Office of State-Federal Relations, Austin,
Texas

Attachment 1 Climatic Regions



Attachment 2 Counties with Extreme to High Fire Danger

