



DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

RICK PERRY
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NIM KIDD
Council Chairperson

August 09, 2011

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 Steve Ogden, 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 Troy Fraser, Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee, State of Texas
The Honorable Tommy Williams, 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 Rick Hardcastle, 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. Steven McCraw, Texas Governor's Office of Homeland Security

FROM: Assistant Director Nim Kidd, Texas Division of Emergency Management

SUBJECT: Statewide Drought Situation Report

Nim Kidd, Chairman
Texas Division of Emergency Mgmt

Lance Williams, Member
Texas Department of Agriculture

Gilbert Jordan, Member
Texas Department of Transportation

Chris Loft, Member
Texas Commission on Environmental
Quality

Michael Dunivan, Member
Texas Forest Service

Brenner Brown, Member
Texas Water Development Board

Dr. Travis Miller, Member
Texas AgriLife Extension Service

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

Vacant, 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

September 08, 2011 at 2:00 p.m. DPS Headquarters

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

July 2011 was remarkably dry and in the end was the third-driest July in Texas history with a statewide-averaged precipitation total of 0.72 inches. Following July, the Office of the State Climatologist declared the past 12 months as the most severe one-year drought since records began back in 1895. In addition to the lack of precipitation, the above-normal temperatures combined with the dryness to augment the devastating drought conditions across most of the state. July 2011 was officially the warmest month in the recorded history of Texas with a statewide-averaged temperature of 87.1°F. Due to these harsh conditions, the drought intensified in every climate division of Texas other than extreme West Texas, extreme Southeast Texas, along the Rio Grande River, and the Lower Valley. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor (USDM), the percentage of Texas with at least extreme drought (D3) conditions increased from 90.21% to 91.73% and the percentage of Texas with exceptional drought (D4) conditions increased from 71.30% to 73.49% during July. As of August 2, 2011 the US Drought Monitor showed the presence of D4 conditions in all but one of the Texas climate divisions (Lower Valley).

Most regions of the state received little rain, especially in the interior of Texas. Almost all major cities were under 50% of their average precipitation for July and some cities received no measureable precipitation (Abilene, Midland, San Angelo, and Wichita Falls). El Paso, Houston, and Port Arthur were the only cities to near or exceed 100% of the average rainfall for the month. The Lower Valley, extreme Southeast Texas, extreme West Texas, and counties along the Rio Grande were the only areas that saw improvement in their drought conditions. The current drought has not persisted as long as the drought in the 1950s, but it has been more severe during its duration, creating a tremendous negative impact on agriculture over the last several months. Irrigated crops were the only hope left for farmers during July, and agricultural experts believe crop yields will be substantially below average across most of the state. Ranchers have faced a similar difficulty with their water supplies and grazing pastures. Many were forced to cull their herds, and some ranchers were pushed to the extreme decision to entirely liquidate their livestock.

According to the Climate Prediction Center, the drought was expected to persist over the next month or two as Texas was predicted to have below-normal precipitation. La Nina was forecasted to return or stay neutral in the coming months, which could provide drier conditions or normal conditions, respectively. Also, hurricane season was expected to be well underway into August and September, which could improve drought conditions along the coast and into South and Southeast Texas. As the summer concluded, temperatures were expected to be above normal across the state, with the southern half of Texas at a greater likelihood of such a positive anomaly occurring.

3. OVERALL STATEWIDE DROUGHT CONDITIONS

The drought is worsening daily in most of Texas' climate regions. The entire State of Texas has now been declared a Natural Disaster. No relief is in sight. The situation is desperate.

Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI):

Based on this index, nine out of the ten climate regions in Texas were in Extremely dry, the highest drought level in this category.

Crop Moisture Index (CMI)

Based on this index, eight out of the ten climate regions in Texas were in Extremely Dry. the highest drought level in this category.

Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI)

Based on this index, seven out of ten regions were Extreme Drought, the highest drought level in this category.

Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI)

Based on this index, all climate regions were in either High, Very High, Extremely or Exceptionally High fire risk conditions.

Stream Flow Index (SFI)

Based on this index, all regions were low in stream flow. Particularly, the flows in High Plains, Low Rolling Plain, North Central and East Texas regions were Extremely to Exceptionally low. No data was available in Lower Valley region.

4. WATER UTILITY STATUS

Over the past month 194 additional water systems have asked their customers to restrict water use by following outdoor water use restrictions. Of these systems, 128 are asking customers to follow a mandatory watering schedule and 66 are asking customers to follow a voluntary watering schedule. Overall there are 687 public water systems that are asking their customers to restrict water use. There are 29 public water systems that have restricted all outside watering.

The TCEQ has implemented two measures to provide public water systems with more options to report on the status of their water system. The TCEQ has an on-line form on the public website that water systems can utilize to report changes to their status of their water system at anytime. The TCEQ has also utilized an automated messaging system to contact every community water system in the state to encourage the water systems to report on their status.

Seasonal forecasts continue to predict the drought to persist or intensify in many areas of the state. Increasing demands and the lack of rainfall are resulting in more water systems implementing the various response stages of their Drought Contingency Plans.

5. WATER RIGHTS – STATEWIDE

New temporary water use permit applications are being reviewed on a site-specific basis and issued if there is sufficient surplus water at the requested source. Applications for new water use permits and amendments to existing permits remained normal for the month. Owners of

water rights in the Brazos River Basin with restrictions are reminded to call the “Hale Clause Hotline” on a weekly basis to determine if diversion of water is allowed.

On July 5, 2011, the executive director of the TCEQ notified certain junior water-right holders in the Llano River Basin with a priority date of 1950 or later that their right to divert water is immediately suspended. Suspended water rights include those with a priority date of 1950 or later, term, and temporary water-right permits in the Llano River Basin above the City of Llano. In order to protect public health and welfare, water rights with municipal uses have not been suspended. Land owners with property adjacent to the Llano River may also continue to divert water for domestic and livestock use as part of their inherent riparian rights.

The availability of unappropriated 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: On July 23, 2011, the U.S. combined ownership at Amistad/Falcon stood at 79.50% of normal conservation capacity, impounding 2,696,421 acre-feet. Overall, the system is holding 75.00% of normal conservation capacity, impounding 4,441,880 acre-feet with Amistad at 90.19% of conservation capacity, impounding 2,954,227 acre-feet and Falcon at 56.21% of conservation capacity, impounding 1,487,653 acre-feet. Mexico has 68.98% of normal conservation capacity, impounding 1,745,459 acre-feet at Amistad/Falcon.

Allocations: As of printing of the June ownership report, the U.S. has allocated 31,228.738 acre-feet to Class A & B water rights, which include irrigation, mining and recreation. Additionally, we have an amount of approximately 637,100 acre feet for future allocations in 2011.

Storage & Loss Amistad vs. Falcon: The U.S. is currently storing approximately 1.683 million acre-feet at Amistad (91.4%) and approximately 1.013 million acre-feet (65.3%) of normal conservation capacity at Falcon. Evaporation and seepage losses at Amistad cycle, as of 07/23/11, are 207,873 acre-feet. For the same period, the U.S. has lost 229,213 acre-feet at Falcon.

Releases to meet demands: In 2011, (through 07/23/11), Mexico has released 199,016 acre-feet from Amistad and 1,030,713 acre-feet from Falcon for Mexico needs. The U.S. has released 994,372 acre-feet from Falcon and 400,734 acre-feet from Amistad for U.S. needs. Combined with gains between Amistad and Falcon, U.S. inflows to Falcon have totaled 572,127 acre-feet. The U.S. demand in the lower Rio Grande has been met at a rate of 58% by direct Rio Grande inflows and Amistad releases this year.

Upper Rio Grande (New Mexico): Currently, Elephant Butte in New Mexico is storing 222,134 (10.98%) acre feet and Caballo Dam in New Mexico, downstream of Elephant Butte is storing 37,293 (16.43%) acre-feet. This water storage in part is used to meet water needs in the El Paso area.

Outlook: All accounts began 2011 with 100% of their usable balance. The National Weather Service continues to report that the combination of windy days, extremely dry weather and above normal temperatures continue to take a toll on deep South Texas. The drought conditions are mainly affecting agricultural interest and allowing for elevated fire risk danger.

Additionally, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, there are six counties which are experiencing drought conditions which are “Exceptional”. Two and parts of three other counties along the Rio Grande are experiencing both “Extreme” drought conditions while two and parts of three other counties are “Moderate to Severe” drought conditions.

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

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: Little rain occurred during the month of July in this area. Some scattered rain events occurred throughout the month that provided some runoff into the area streams. The stream flows quickly declined to below normal for this time of the year. Most of the counties in this area are currently experiencing “Exceptional Drought” conditions at this time. Portions of Victoria, Mc Mullen, La Salle, Duval, Jim Wells, and Kleberg counties are experiencing “Extreme to Exceptional Drought” conditions. Portions of Jim Hogg, Brooks and Kenedy Counties are experiencing “Severe to Extreme Drought” conditions. The Willacy County area is currently experiencing “Severe Drought” conditions. Most 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	July Beginning flows CFS	July Ending Flows CFS	July Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Guadalupe River near Victoria	369.00	192.00	2060.00
San Antonio River near Goliad	327.00	114.00	882.00
San Antonio River at McFaddin below Goliad	441.00	130.00	1600.00
Guadalupe River near Tivoli	625.00	318.00	1010.00
Mission River near Refugio	1.20	0.00	159.00
Nueces River at Calallen Dam	0.00	2.90	3040.00
Aransas River near Skidmore	3.50	3.30	48.00

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

Corpus Christi Reservoir System: Some inflows occurred into the Corpus Christi Reservoir System for the month of July. The level of the reservoir system has decreased and was at 65.7% of capacity at the end of the month, impounding 626,207 acre-feet compared to 90.0% of capacity, impounding 857,264 acre-feet at this time last year. The level of Choke Canyon was at 69.1% of capacity, impounding 480,716 acre-feet compared to 87.4% of capacity, impounding 608,000 acre-feet at this time last year. The level of Lake Corpus Christi was at 56.6% of capacity, impounding 145,491 acre-feet compared to 96.9% of capacity, impounding 249,264 acre-feet at this time last year. The City of Corpus Christi continues to divert much of their monthly water supply needs from Lake Texana.

Drought Restrictions: The City of Victoria has reached their water right restriction. The TCEQ has allowed the City of Victoria to continue to divert and use surface water from the Guadalupe River. This City of Victoria is currently exchanging ground water for the surface water being diverted from the river. The City of Victoria is introducing 2% more water into the river than what is being diverted. Several other water rights on the Guadalupe River have also met their restriction, but they are not actively diverting. Several water rights on the San Antonio River have also met their restrictions, but they are not actively diverting.

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: The southernmost portions of this area received 0.75 to 3 inches of rainfall for the month of July, and the eastern portions of the area, including the Lavaca area, received 0.75 to 2 inches. Crops in this entire area are suffering severely due to drought conditions. Irrigation activity has decreased substantially. Lake Texana is at 54% of capacity, which is equal to 35.68 ft. above mean sea level. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, this area is experiencing “Exceptional Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions: Many stream flows in this area are at all time lows.

Site	July Beginning flows CFS	July Ending flows CFS	July Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
San Antonio River near Falls City	94.00	68.00	597.00
Cibolo Creek near Falls City	25.00	17.00	162.00
Guadalupe River near Gonzales	266.00	257.00	2860.00
The Lavaca River at Edna	7.20	4.90	280.00
Navidad River near Hallettsville	0.01	0.01	39.00
Atascosa River near Whitsett	1.30	0.56	140.00
Frio River near Tilden	0.00	0.00	601.00
Nueces River near Tilden	0.00	0.00	642.00

Drought Restrictions: Many Water Rights in this area have met the flow restriction stated on the permit. Most Temporary Water Rights have been suspended.

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: Approximately 0.88 of an inch of rainfall was measured in the San Antonio Regional Area for the month of July. The U.S. Drought Monitor dated July 26, 2011 indicates the San Antonio Regional Area is experiencing “Exceptional Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions: The flows in the Guadalupe, San Marcos, and Blanco Rivers have continued to decrease due to the lack of rainfall for the month of July. The small creeks and perennial creeks have continued to remain dry. Irrigation and industrial use have remained constant.

Site	July Beginning flows CFS	July Ending flows CFS	July Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
<i>Guadalupe River at Spring Ranch</i>	4.00	0.00	454.00
<i>San Marcos River at Luling</i>	96.00	88.00	577.00
Blanco River at Wimberley	10.00	7.80	148.00

As of July 31, 2011, Canyon Lake Reservoir was at 902.97 feet elevation and 87.37% of capacity, impounding 330,938 acre-feet. Lake Medina Reservoir was at 1029.19 feet elevation and 37.65% of capacity, impounding 95,937 acre-feet. San Marcos Springs were flowing at 106 CFS. The historical monthly average for the San Marcos Springs in July is 200 CFS. Comal Springs were flowing at 179 CFS. The historical monthly average for the Comal Springs in July is 297 CFS. The J-17 Bexar reading was at 645 on July 31.

Drought Restrictions: Some water rights restrictions have been met. At this time temporary permits have been suspended in several counties.

Area Counties: Bandera, Blanco, Kendall and Kerr

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received 0.20 to 0.60 inches of rainfall for the month of July. The Crop Moisture Index indicates this area of the hill country is classified as “Extremely Dry”. Most of the 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 that this area is currently experiencing “Exceptional Drought” conditions.

Site	July Beginning flows CFS	July Ending flows CFS	July Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Guadalupe River at Kerrville	13.00	14.00	197.00
Guadalupe River at Comfort	13.00	14.00	253.00
Medina River at Bandera	1.70	0.00	423.00

All the major streams and their tributaries are dry or below their historical averages.

Drought Restrictions: Currently Water Right Permits from 1950 to present are still suspended, as well as all temporary water permits above Canyon Lake and Lake Medina. The City of Kerrville’s surface water diversions from the Guadalupe River are at 500,000 gallons per day.

Area Counties: Edwards, Real, Kinney, Uvalde, Zavala, Dimmit, Medina, and Frio

Rainfall and Area Conditions: There was no relief from the severe drought conditions across the South West Texas area during the month of July. This area received 0.40 to 1.40 inches of rainfall for the month of July. There have been very few surface water diversions in this area due to little or no stream flows. Crops being irrigated in the area are wheat, cabbage, onions, hay grazer and pecans. Soil conditions are classified as “Extremely Dry”.

The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates that this area is experiencing “Exceptional Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions: Most stream flow readings in this area are at or near historical lows at this time.

Site	July Starting flows CFS	July Ending flows CFS	July Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Nueces River at Laguna	8.90	5.90	170.00
Nueces River near Brackettville	0.00	0.00	45.00
Nueces River below Uvalde	0.90	0.51	156.00
Frio River at Concan	5.20	0.00	190.00
Sabinal River at Sabinal	0.06	0.00	100.00
Leona River near Uvalde	0.00	0.00	51.00

Drought Restrictions: All Water Rights that are active and not met any flow restrictions have been restricted to pumping schedules. All temporary permits in the area are currently suspended at this time.

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: The Concho River Valley received below average rainfall amounts for the month of July. Rainfall in San Angelo was 0.00 inches. Areas surrounding San Angelo received slightly higher rainfall amounts. The average rainfall for the month of July is 1.69 inches. The total amount of rainfall for the year is 2.36 inches. There were 27 of 31 days above 100 degrees for the month of July. The Texas Crop Moisture Index indicates the area as having “Severely Dry” soil conditions. The State Drought Monitor Index indicates the Concho Valley as having “Exceptional” conditions. Corn and sorghum are being harvested and cotton has been established.

Stream flow Conditions: Area reservoirs are showing a decrease in the amount of storage from the previous month’s amounts. Lake Nasworthy is at 82% of capacity, impounding 8,372 acre-feet. O. C. Fisher is at 0% of capacity, impounding 0 acre-feet. Twin Buttes Lake is at 9% of capacity, impounding 17,582 acre-feet.

Site	July Beginning Flows CFS	July Ending Flows CFS	July Historical Mean Flows
<i>Concho Watermaster</i>			
Spring Creek above Twin Buttes Reservoir	0.00	0.00	3.60
Concho River at San Angelo and Bell St.	5.40	2.30	92.00
South Concho at Christoval	1.60	3.50	37.00

Drought Restrictions: Currently there are restrictions and/or curtailment of diversions based on priority dates in the Concho Valley. All requests for diversion must be approved prior to diversion.

8. UPPER COLORADO (Concho River watershed not included)

The upper Colorado River area received trace amounts of precipitation during July 2011. The National Weather Service in San Angelo reported monthly precipitation of 0.0 inches, which is 1.10 inches less than normal. The reported year-to-date annual total is 2.94 inches, which is 8.36 inches below normal. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, area drought condition in Crockett and Concho Counties is extreme to exceptional. Tom Green, Coke, Sterling, Reagan, Irion, Schleicher, Sutton, Kimble, Menard, Mason, and McCulloch counties have exceptional drought conditions. USGS gauges indicate no flow in the Colorado River near Gail, TX down to Ballinger, TX. USGS gauges indicate less than the long term median flow in the San Saba River in Menard, TX, no flow near Brady, TX, and less than the long term median flow in San Saba, TX. The North Llano River above Junction had no flow. The Llano River below Junction, TX to the Llano River below Mason, TX had less flow than the long-term median. The pool levels of EV Spence Reservoir and OH Ivie Reservoir have decreased from June levels. The pool levels are 0.6% and 23.2% of capacity, respectively.

9. TEXAS PANHANDLE AND SOUTHERN HIGH PLAINS

Reporting Station: National Weather Service-Amarillo

	Precipitation (in.)	Average(in.)	Departure(in.)
July	0.94	2.32	-1.38
2011 Year-to-date	2.11	11.74	-9.63

Reservoir Status as of 06.28.11

Reservoir (Basin)	Conservation Pool (elevation)	Current (elevation)	Percent of Capacity	% Change (from last report)
Greenbelt (Red)	2664.00	2628.36	21.53	-1.39
Mackenzie (Red)	3100.00	3016.70	10.55	-0.41
Meredith (Canadian)	2936.50	2846.19	0.00	0.00

Lubbock Area:

Reporting Station: Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport (07.30.11)

	Precipitation (in.)	Average(in.)	Departure(in.)
July	0.05	2.06	-2.01
2011 Year-to-date	1.15	10.61	-9.46

Reservoir report: (Status as of 08.01.11)

Reservoir Basin (Brazos)	Conservation Pool (elevation)	Current (elevation)	% of Capacity	% Change (from last report)
Alan Henry	2220.00	2214.26	84.52	-2.00
White River	2372.20	2352.61	21.75	-2.86

Voluntary water use restrictions: Ralls, Crosbyton, Post, Spur, White River MWD, Valley WSC; New: Sudan

Mandatory water use restrictions: Amherst, Levelland, Lubbock.

10. WILDLIFE CONCERNS

No information was received by the time of this report.

11. AGRICULTURE CONCERNS

Oppressive heat and exceptional drought conditions continued to degrade agricultural conditions. July was a month when Texans began a concerted liquidation of cow herds with one specialist estimated more than 600,000 cows were sold from ranches this year. We also saw a serious movement of young calves entering the sale rings as ranchers sought to remove more livestock from ranches which were critically short of forages and water. Sale volumes reached record numbers at many auctions, and, in some cases, auctions were turning trucks loaded with cattle back as they were unable to handle the volume.

Crop production did not fare much better. Corn harvest had reached the Blacklands of North Texas and cotton harvest was active along the coast. Yields have been generally disappointing. Many corn fields in Central Texas were harvested for forage or shredded down rather than harvesting for grain. Yields were very poor and the demand for fodder was great. Sorghum yields were a bit better than the corn, and much sorghum stubble was also harvested for hay. Soybeans in North Texas were averaging about half of normal yields. The greatest crop losses were in west Texas, with an estimated 3.5 million acres of cotton abandoned due to drought in the Edwards Plateau, Rolling Plains and High Plains. Irrigated farmers have not been spared. Wells with adequate irrigation capacity to produce good crops in average weather conditions have not been adequate to keep crops alive. Many producers of corn, cotton and sorghum have diverted water from part of their pivots to provide adequate water for the remainder of the pivot. With corn faring very poorly in the heat, corn farmers who also grow cotton are diverting water from corn fields to save cotton in the North Plains.

It is the opinion of many that this drought will result in the largest single agricultural loss in state history. Firm estimates should be available from AgriLife Extension economists by mid-August.

The following are excerpts from reports of Texas AgriLife Extension regional reporters for the week ending on July 30:

Central: Conditions remained very dry. Large numbers of cows were being taken to sale barns as pasture, hay and water resources can no longer support them. Hay sources were hard to find. Producers were baling corn stalks and other marginal forages. Stock-water tanks were getting low with some completely dry.

East: Temperatures above 100 degrees and little to no rain made pasture conditions very poor. Hay production halted in most areas. Producers struggled to find hay and water for cattle. Many continued to cull herds or sell out completely. As bad as conditions were, livestock that were given supplemental feed remained in fair to good condition. Grasshoppers continued damage to already limited forage supplies.

Far West: The region was very hot, dry and windy. Irrigated cotton fields were in bloom; some in cut-out stage, with the crop maturing early due to very high temperatures. Ranchers continued to supply supplemental feed and minerals for livestock. Area ranchers were praying for rain as rangeland grasses crumbled. Locoweed and twin-leaf senna, both toxic weeds, were the only green in some areas, but there were no reports of poisoning. Calves averaging 200 pounds were being sold. There have been many reports of colic in horses.

North: No rain and temperatures of 100 degrees and above took a toll on pastures and hay meadows. Corn that was not cut for silage was yielding 40 to 70 bushels per acre. Some grain sorghum was harvested, but yield reports weren't in. About 95 percent of grain sorghum was being baled as hay, as sorghum stalks provide low quality forage for livestock producers in desperate need of feed and income from sorghum forage offsets lower than normal yields. Early planted soybeans were expected to yield 10 to 12 bushels per acre, or about half of normal yield levels. Later planted soybeans were either harvested for hay or plowed under. With no relief from the heat in sight or any rain forecast, there was not any further forage production expected. Limited supplies of hay were fast dwindling and quickly sold. Livestock were suffering. Water for livestock was becoming a major concern as stock-ponds levels dropped. Producers continued to sell livestock. The Van Zandt County Auction sold 900 head on July 23, a high for a single day in July. Cotton was in poor to fair condition.

Panhandle: There were reports of some rain in parts of Carson and Sherman counties, but most of the region continued to suffer under extremely hot and dry conditions. Soil moisture levels were very poor in most counties. Mites are known to become a problem under hot, dry conditions, and they are showing up in corn. Some producers were spraying the second time. Producers continued to reduce cow/calf herds.

Rolling Plains: The region remained extremely dry and hot. With daytime temperatures above 110 degrees, the National Weather Service issued excessive heat warnings. All grasses and trees were in jeopardy in rural and urban areas. Additional water restrictions were expected, which will add to landscape losses. Ranchers were continually shipping cull cows and calves in an effort to reduce pressure on what small amount of grazing was left. Pastures were grazed down, and ranchers were running out of money to buy supplemental feeds as they have been feeding since before winter. Some ranchers were shipping cattle north trying to hold on to them for when it does start to rain. Others were forced to entirely liquidate entire herds to lack of grazing. Some livestock producers worried if they sell off now, they may not be able to get back into the cattle business if replacement prices skyrocket after the drought ends. Farmers were in the same condition as most row crops were "disastered-out" for crop insurance. Stock-water tank levels continued to drop. There were also fish die-offs in urban lakes because of low water levels and oxygen depletion. Burn bans remained in effect.

South: The hopes of rain from Tropical Storm Don turned to disappointment for parts of the region. Only scattered showers were received. The northern and eastern counties received on average from 0.5 inch to 0.75 inch. Most of Zapata County got about 1 inch. Soil-moisture levels were nearly 100 percent very short throughout most of the region. The exceptions were Zapata County with 75 percent adequate levels and Willacy County with eighty-five percent adequate levels. The drought continued to take a toll on rangeland,

pastures and livestock. Hay supplies were diminishing, and ranchers continued to liquidate herds as they ran out of supplemental feeds. Stock-tank water levels continued to drop because of extremely hot temperatures and extremely high evaporation rates. Livestock producers reported cattle were losing weight. Some were selling cattle, while others continued to feed their base herds, fearing that they would not be able to replace what has taken them years to establish. In Webb County, some ranchers reported losing baby calves to extremely high temperatures. Live Oak County ranchers had already sold most of their cattle. In Frio County, corn harvesting was in full swing, sorghum harvesting began and producers were irrigating peanuts. In Jim Wells County, the cotton harvest was ongoing. In Zavala County, early planted cotton fields were about two weeks from being harvest-ready, while in the Cameron and Hidalgo counties the harvest was in full swing.

South Plains: The region remained very dry, with temperatures ranging from the upper 90s to 100s with lows in the 70s. There were reports of scattered showers, but the exceptional drought continued. Producers were cutting corn early for silage due to drought. Some irrigated cotton was being abandoned to concentrate available water for other crops. All counties in the district remained under burn bans. Rangeland and pastures were dry too. Livestock producers were culling herds because of lack of water and supplemental feed. This July was the driest one in recorded history.

Southeast: Tree loss is widespread in Madison County. Jefferson County received from half-inch to 8 inches of rain, improving crops and pastures. Daytime high temperatures were in the upper 90s with nighttime lows in the upper 70s. Some rain last week helped pastures and crops. Despite the rains, ponds were still at an all-time low. Livestock remained in good condition because producers continued to provide supplemental feed and reduced herd sizes.

Southwest: Tropical Storm Don promised rain over the weekend, but delivered only a trace of moisture. Sporadic thunderstorms the week before deposited from a trace to three-quarters of an inch of rain in some parts of the area. Generally, however, the region has remained almost completely dry since May 13. July ended with about 0.75 inch of rain in some counties, making Oct. 1 to July 31 the driest period on record with only 3.36 inches total rain. The region remained in field wildfire alert status. Stock tanks were dry. Forage availability remained well below average. The corn and sorghum harvests were nearly complete. The watermelon, cantaloupe and sweet corn harvests were winding down. Peanuts, cotton, pecans and landscape nursery crops continued to make good progress wherever irrigation water was still available.

West Central: The region remained extremely dry with triple-digit temperatures. The agricultural situation continued to worsen. Irrigated cotton was in fair condition. All other crops failed. Most producers were out of grazing and water for livestock. Water wells were drying up. Livestock producers were selling large numbers of cows.

12. WILDFIRE CONCERNS

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is used to help determine the 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 their 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 the spring dormant season following winter precipitation.

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

KBDI = 401 – 600: Typical of late summer and 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 July 31, 2011, there were 251 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 comprised 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.

Nim Kidd, Texas Division of Emergency Management, (512) 424-2436, fax (512) 424-2444, website: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem>

Brenner Brown, Texas Water Development Board, (512) 475-1128, fax (512) 475-2053, website: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us>

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

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

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

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

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

Gilbert Jordan, Texas Department of Transportation, (512) 416-3270, fax (512) 416-2941, website: <http://www.txdot.state.tx.us>

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

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

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

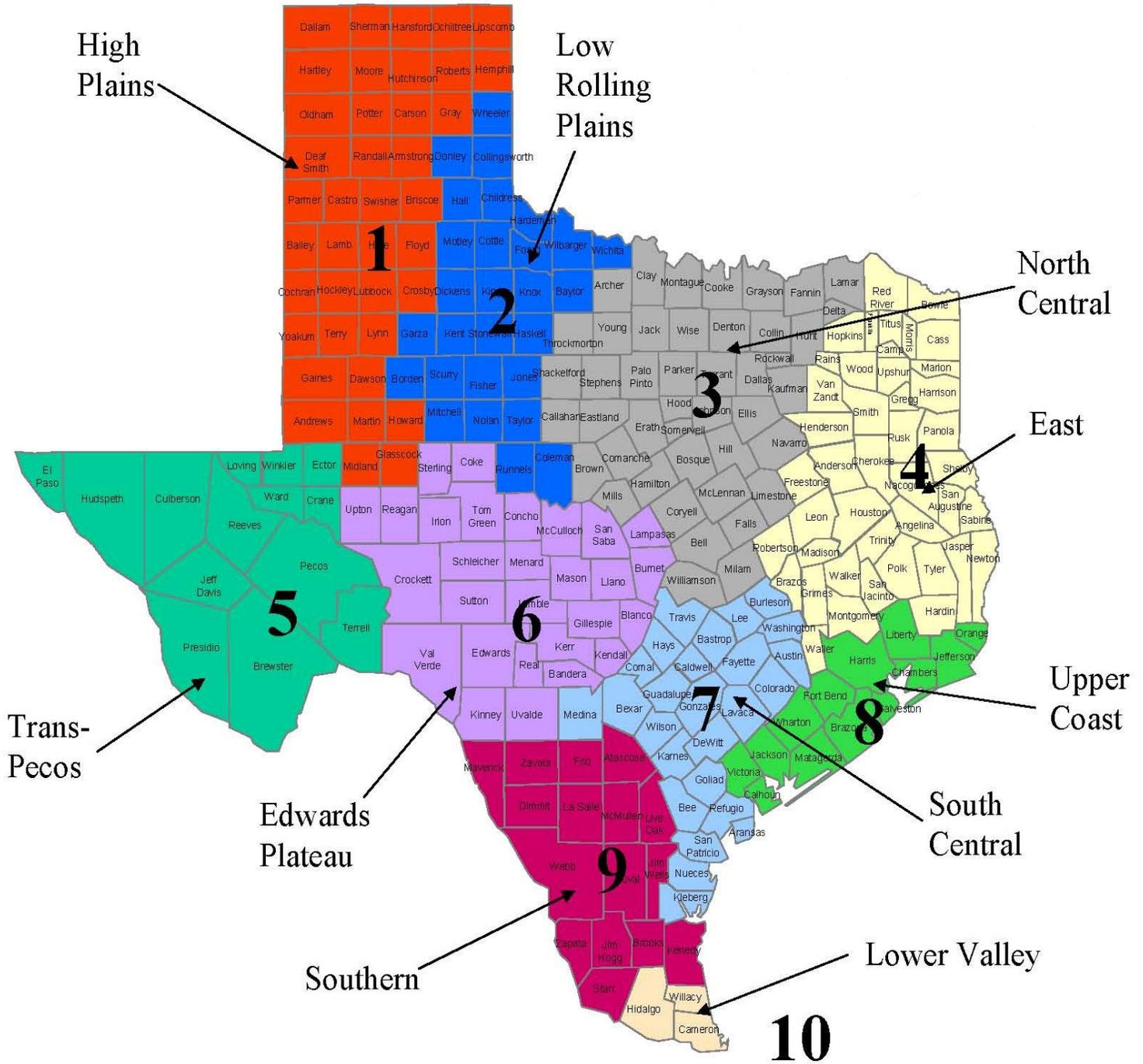
David A. Van Dresar, Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts, (979) 968-3135, fax (979) 968-3194, website: <http://www.texasgroundwater.org/>

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

Gus Garcia, Texas Department of Rural Affairs, (979) 968-8307, fax (979) 968-8714, website: <http://www.tdra.texas.gov>

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

Attachment 1 Climatic Regions



Attachment 2

Counties with Extreme to High Fire Danger

