



DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

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NIM KIDD
Council Chairperson

January 31, 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: 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

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 AgriLife Extension Service

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

Feb 10, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. via teleconference.

2. GENERAL CONDITIONS

December 2010 continued a trend of exceptionally dry weather across the entire state outside of the Panhandle that was perhaps one of the driest October-December periods in the history of Texas. Because of an abundance of precipitation during the winter of 2009-2010 and early spring of 2010 led to a significant rejuvenation of vegetation across most of the state, there is concern that the upcoming winter might produce one of the most active wildfire seasons in some time. During December, the percentage of the state with drought conditions increased from 32.51% to 69.43%. More alarmingly, the percentage of Texas with at least a severe drought (D2) designation jumped from 14.28% to 37.46%, and the percentage of Texas with at least an extreme drought (D3) designation jumped from 0.81% to nearly 9.59%.

Essentially all of the counties in Texas in the Trans Pecos, Edwards Plateau, South Texas, and the Lower Valley picked up less than 0.50" of precipitation from the start of autumn to the end of December. Two separate areas of D3 were present near the Rio Grande, one stretching from Edwards County to Real County and the other from southern Kinney County to northern La Salle County. Another larger D3 area in Southeast Texas stretched from Caldwell County to Sabine and Newton counties near the Louisiana border. By the end of December, the USDM designated D2 conditions in a continuous area that stretched from Bowie County in Northeast Texas to Bexar County in South Central Texas to Hidalgo County in the Lower Valley to southern Brewster County in the Trans Pecos.

The major concern this winter is the high likelihood of an active wildfire season, particularly in areas of northern Texas where vegetation growth was extensive during the past year because of an abundance of precipitation. La Nina conditions in place across the equatorial Pacific Ocean and are expected to continue at least into the spring of 2011, according to the Climate Prediction Center (CPC). The current La Nina was likely near its peak as 2010 came to a close and the intensity of the current cycle is expected to lessen heading into the spring of 2011.

During January 2010, there are equal chances of above, below, and near normal precipitation across all of Texas. During the first three months of 2011 (JFM 2011) , there are equal chances of above, below, and near normal precipitation in the Low Rolling Plains, North Central Texas, East Texas, the eastern Edwards Plateau, and South Central Texas. There is a 33-40% chance of below normal JFM 2011 precipitation in the eastern Panhandle, western Edwards Plateau, the Upper Texas Coast, South Texas, and the Lower Valley. There is a 40-50% chance of below normal JFM 2011 precipitation in the eastern Panhandle and the Trans Pecos, and a greater than 50% chance in the city of El Paso. Current drought areas are expected to persist or intensify over the next 3 months and drought is expected to develop in the Panhandle and the Low Rolling Plains.

3. OVERALL STATEWIDE DROUGHT CONDITIONS

By the drought indices, the state still has not been bad drought except the East Texas region. The drought is expected to develop in the next a few months because of the lack of precipitation.

Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI):

The East Texas region has escalated from moderate drought to severe drought in past month, and Trans-Pecos and Upper Coast regions were now in Mild Drought. Everywhere else were still either in normal or wet spell.

Crop Moisture Index (CMI)

All regions were in Slightly Dry, including Trans-Pecos, Edwards Plateau, and Southern regions that were in Moderately Dry condition a month ago.

Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI)

All regions were in Normal conditions.

Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI)

Four regions have fire risk above average and rest all have high fire risk.

Stream Flow Index (SFI)

Flows were near normal range or high in all regions.

4. WATER UTILITY STATUS

January 2011 began with 75 public water systems on the drought list asking customers to conserve water by following outdoor water use restrictions. All of these systems are ones remaining from December 2010. Of these systems, 43 are asking that customers follow a mandatory watering schedule and 32 are asking for voluntary reductions in usage.

Future forecasts continue to predict little rain in the coming months. If this holds true, public water systems will enter the traditional outdoor growing season with dry conditions resulting in increased water demand and water supplies that have not been replenished with normal rainfall. This would result in numerous water systems hitting the triggers of their Drought Contingency Plans and asking customers to restrict outdoor watering.

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. Water rights owners in the Brazos River Basin whose permits contain Hale Clause restrictions are observing the less severe stream flow restrictions of their permits during the winter months. The availability of un-appropriated water for new 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 December 25, 2010, the U.S. combined ownership at Amistad/Falcon stood at 99.23% of temporary conservation capacity, impounding 3,477,946 acre-feet, up from 80.16% of normal conservation capacity, impounding 2,719,121 acre-feet a year ago at this time. Overall the system is holding 97.89% of temporary conservation capacity, impounding 5,986,283 acre-feet with Amistad at 101.08% of conservation capacity, impounding 3,310,940 acre-feet and Falcon at 95.44% of temporary conservation capacity, impounding 2,710,204 acre-feet. Mexico has 96.09% of temporary conservation capacity, impounding 2,508,337 acre-feet at Amistad/Falcon.

Allocations: As of printing of the November ownership report, the U.S. has allocated 552,219.751 acre-feet to Class A & B water rights, which include irrigation, mining and recreation. Additionally, the U.S. has an amount of approximately 698,140 acre feet for future allocations in 2010.

Storage & Loss Amistad vs. Falcon: The U.S. is currently storing approximately 1.841 million acre-feet at Amistad (100%); and approximately 1.637 million acre-feet (98.4%) of temporary conservation capacity at Falcon. Evaporation and seepage losses at Amistad cycle, as of 12/25/10, are 21,118 acre-feet. For the same period, the U.S. has lost 26,935 acre-feet at Falcon.

Releases to meet demands: In 2010, through 12/18/10, Mexico has released 233,555 acre-feet from Amistad and 637,463 acre-feet from Falcon Mexico needs. The U.S. has released 537,117 acre-feet from Falcon and 403,063 acre-feet from Amistad for U.S. needs. Combined with gains between Amistad and Falcon, U.S. inflows to Falcon have totaled 621,039 acre-feet. The U.S. demand in the lower Rio Grande has been met at a rate of 154% by direct Rio Grande inflows and Amistad releases this year.

Upper Rio Grande (New Mexico): Currently, Elephant Butte in New Mexico is at 21.35% of capacity, impounding 432,108 acre-feet and Caballo Dam in New Mexico, downstream of Elephant Butte is at 9.64% of capacity, impounding 21,889 acre-feet.

Outlook: No Charge diversions have been in effect since July, 2010 between Amistad Reservoir and the Gulf of Mexico. Falcon Reservoir is currently on a temporary conservation level of 303.42 feet. The National Weather Service continues to report that moderate to strong La Nina conditions result in extremely dry weather across deep South Texas.

Additionally, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor, the entire Rio Grande Basin is experiencing drought conditions ranging from “Abnormally Dry” to “Severe Drought” in areas from between Presidio and Cameron Counties.

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, and Jim Hogg

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received little rainfall during the month of December though some isolated showers occurred during the latter part of the month. These showers provided some runoff into the area streams, but the stream flows quickly declined. Stream flows of area streams are currently flowing below the mean average for this time of the year. The U. S. Drought Monitor indicates that counties to the far west and inland counties in the southern part of this area are currently experiencing “Severe Drought” conditions at this time. Counties in the far south along the coast in this area are experiencing “Moderate Dry” conditions at this time. Counties in the Coastal Bend, including Nueces, San Patricio, Bee, Aransas, Refugio, Goliad, Victoria and Calhoun Counties are currently experiencing “Abnormally Dry” 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	December Beginning flows CFS	December Ending Flows CFS *	December Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
Guadalupe River near Victoria	861.00	799.00	1,720.00
San Antonio River near Goliad	395.00	387.00	583.00
San Antonio River at McFaddin below Goliad	507.00	518.00	612.00
Guadalupe River near Tivoli	1,210.00	*	2,720.00
Mission River near Refugio	19	20.00	62.00
Nueces River at Calallen Dam	0	15.00	365.00
Aransas River near Skidmore	9.2	10.00	18.00

* USGS Gauge values not available

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 did not receive significant inflows for the month of December. The level of the reservoir system has decreased and was at 82.2% of capacity, impounding 782,763 acre-feet compared to 58.6% of capacity, impounding 557,923 acre-feet at this time last year. The level of Choke Canyon was at 80.2% of capacity, impounding 557,401 acre-feet compared to 67.9% of capacity, impounding 472,199 acre-feet at this time last year. The level of Lake Corpus Christi is at 87.6% of capacity, impounding 225,362 acre-feet compared to 33.3% of capacity, impounding 85,724 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: 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 0 to 1.5 inches of rainfall for the month of December, and the eastern portions of the area, including the Lavaca area, received .25 to 1.5 inches. Winter oats and rye crops are not doing well at this time due to the shortage of rainfall in the last few months. Lake Texana is at 84% of capacity, 41.05 ft. above mean sea level.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, this area is experiencing “Abnormally Dry” to “Extreme Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions:

Site	December Beginning flows CFS	December Ending flows CFS*	December Historical Mean CFS
South Texas Watermaster			
San Antonio River near Falls City	374.00	361.00	398.00
Cibolo Creek near Falls City	48.00	51.00	106.00

Guadalupe River near Gonzales	799.00	796.00	2020.00
The Lavaca River at Edna	41.00	45.00	265.00
Navidad River near Hallettsville	7.6	11.00	124.00
Atascosa River near Whitsett	5.9	6.4	57.00
Frio River near Tilden	.15	0	97.00
Nueces River near Tilden	0	0	111.00

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

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: This area received 0.49 to 1.38 inches of rainfall for the month of December. The Crop Moisture Index indicates this area of the hill country is classified as “Normal”. 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 “Severe Drought” to “Extreme Drought” conditions.

Stream flow Condition:

Site	December Beginning flows CFS	December Ending flows CFS*	December Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Guadalupe River at Kerrville	56.00	69.00	128.00
Guadalupe River at Comfort	76.00	87.00	202.00
Medina River at Bandera	33.00	38.00	136.00

Major streams and their tributaries are all below their historical averages.

Drought Restrictions: There are currently no permits being restricted in this area. Temporary water rights issued in the San Antonio River Basin (above Lake Medina) and the Guadalupe River Basin (above Canyon Lake) are being 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 0.49 to 1.38 inches of rainfall for the month of December. The Crop Moisture Index indicates this area of the hill country is classified as “Normal”. 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 “Severe Drought” to “Extreme Drought” conditions.

Stream flow Conditions:

Site	December Beginning flows CFS	December Ending flows CFS	December Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Nueces River at Laguna	29.00	31.00	127.00
Nueces River near Brackettville	.17	.17	5.1
Nueces River below Uvalde	6.6	6.2	85
Frio River at Concan	24.00	30.00	101.00
Sabinal River at Sabinal	1.4	2.4	17.00
Leona River near Uvalde	2.8	1.2	40.00

Drought Restrictions: Permits that have not met their stream flow restrictions are being regulated. The Zavala/Dimmit Water District is not allowing diversions other than for Domestic and Livestock use. Also, Temporary Permits have been restricted.

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

Rainfall and Area Conditions: Approximately .63 inches of rainfall was measured in the San Antonio Regional Area for the month of December. The U.S. Drought Monitor dated December 30, 2010 indicates the San Antonio Regional Area is experiencing “Severe Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions: The flows in the Guadalupe, San Marcos, and Blanco Rivers have significantly dropped due to the lack of rainfall. The small creeks and perennial creeks have ceased flowing. Irrigation use has decreased and industrial use remains constant.

Site	December Starting flows CFS	December Ending flows CFS*	December Historical Mean CFS
<i>South Texas Watermaster</i>			
Guadalupe River at Spring Branch	98.00	125.00	314.00
San Marcos River at Luling	208.00	200.00	555.00
Blanco River at Wimberley	65.00	60.00	126.00

As of December 31, 2010, Canyon Lake Reservoir was at 907.82 feet elevation and 97.46% of capacity, impounding 369,151 acre-feet. Lake Medina Reservoir was at 1048.26 feet elevation and 66.09% of capacity, impounding 168,421 acre-feet. San Marcos Springs were flowing at 159 CFS. The historical monthly average for the San Marcos Springs in December is 198 CFS. Comal Springs were flowing at 317 CFS. The historical monthly average for the Comal Springs in December is 310 CFS. The J-17 Bexar reading was at 671.5 on December 31.

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, Schleicher.

Rainfall and Area Conditions: The Concho River Valley received average amounts of rainfall for the month of December. Rainfall in San Angelo was 0.99 inches. Areas surrounding San Angelo received slightly higher rainfall amounts. The average rainfall for the month of December is 1.03 inches. The total amount of rainfall for the year is 20.17 inches. The Texas Crop Moisture Index indicates the area as having “Slightly High” to “Favorably Moist” soil conditions. Cotton has been harvested and winter wheat has been planted. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates the Concho Valley as having “Moderate” to “Severe Drought” conditions at this time.

Stream flow Conditions: Lake Nasworthy is at 83% of capacity, impounding 8,460 acre-feet. O. C. Fisher is at 2% of capacity, impounding 2,111 acre-feet. Twin Buttes Lake is at 18% of capacity, impounding 33,107 acre-feet.

Site	June Beginning Flows CFS	June Ending Flows CFS	Historical Mean Flows
<i>Concho Watermaster</i>			
Spring Creek above Twin Buttes Reservoir	0.0	6.6	16.00
Concho River at San Angelo and Bell St.	7.5	8.2	30.00
South Concho at Christoval	4.6	4.2	21.00

Drought Restrictions: The diversion rates in this area are being restricted due to low flow conditions. The diversions are being reviewed on a case-by-case basis according to adjudicated priority date.

8. UPPER COLORADO (Concho River watershed not included)

The upper Colorado River area received slightly more than normal precipitation during December. The National Weather Service in San Angelo reported monthly precipitation of 0.99 inches, which is 0.05 inches above normal. The reported year-to-date annual total is 20.13 inches, which is 0.78 below normal. According to the U.S. Drought Monitor, area drought conditions in Crockett, Sutton and Kimble counties are mostly severe with extreme conditions on the south boundaries; Schleicher, Menard, Mason and Reagan counties have severe drought conditions; Sterling, Concho, McCulloch and Irion counties have moderate to severe drought conditions; Coke county has abnormally dry drought conditions; and Tom Green county has abnormally dry, moderate and severe drought conditions. USGS gauges

indicate no flow in the Colorado River near Gail, TX and flows below the USGS long-term median near Colorado City, TX. USGS gauges indicate flows below the USGS long-term median in the Colorado River above Silver, TX down to Ballinger, TX. The San Saba River has flows below the USGS long-term median in Menard, TX to San Saba, TX. The North Llano River above and the Llano River below Junction, TX to the Llano River below Mason, TX are flowing lower than the USGS long-term median. The pool levels of EV Spence Reservoir and OH Ivie Reservoir have decreased from November levels. The pool levels are 2.9% and 32.5% of capacity, respectively.

9. TEXAS PANHANDLE AND SOUTHERN HIGH PLAINS

Amarillo Area:

Lake Greenbelt started December at 52.72 feet and ended the month at 52.67 feet. Lake Meredith started December at 38.59 feet and ended the month at 38.41 feet. Lake MacKenzie started December at 72.04 feet and ended the month at 71.72 feet. The Amarillo National Weather Service reported a total rainfall in December of .22 inches, which is 0.39 inches below average. Also reported was 2.0 inches of snowfall, which is 1.7 inches below average. Since January 1, 2010, the NWS has reported a total of 26.54 inches of rainfall, which is 6.83 inches above normal for the year.

Lubbock Area:

Reporting Station: Lubbock Preston Smith International Airport

	Precipitation	Average	Departure
December	Trace	.67	-.67
2010 Year-to-date	26.46	18.69	+7.77

Reservoir report:

Reservoir Basin (Brazos)	Conservation Pool (elevation)	Current (elevation)	% of Capacity	% Change (from last report)
Alan Henry	2220.00	2218.01	94.43	- 1.10
White River	2372.20	2355.97	34.22	- 0.86

The long term drought situation has not changed. All communities previously noted as initiating water restrictions remained on those restrictions. There was no change to the list during December. The Cities of Amherst, Levelland, and Lubbock remained on mandatory drought restriction status. The Cities of Ralls, Crosbyton, Spur and Post, White River MWD, and Valley WSC in the South Plains area remained on voluntary drought restriction status.

10. WILDLIFE CONCERNS

No information was received by the time of this report.

11. AGRICULTURE CONCERNS

Light to moderate rainfall across southern, central and eastern Texas brought some relief to the severe drought, but remained well short of what is needed going into spring for crops and forages. Rain over the holidays and in the first week of January improved wheat stands in the Blacklands. The Plains and far west Texas remain critically short.

AgriLife Extension district reporters compiled the following summaries for the week ending January 11:

Central: Winter pastures were in poor shape because of drought-like conditions throughout the fall. Rainfall and cooler temperatures arrived on Jan. 10, and this precipitation was badly needed for pastures, tanks and small grains. Producers continued to provide livestock with hay and other supplemental feed.

Coastal Bend: Rain provided much needed moisture for low ponds and struggling winter pastures. Farmers and ranchers put spring-wheat planting on hold, waiting on more moisture. Livestock producers continued to supplement cattle with hay and protein.

East: Much of the area was still dry and in need of rainfall for most of the reporting period. Water levels continued to recede. Winter forages grew slowly due to lack of rain. Producers were still purchasing hay from other areas, and in some counties, they were concerned about having enough to make it through the winter. However, livestock remained in fair to good condition with supplemental feed being provided. A snowstorm late in the reporting period brought some moisture, but cold wet conditions will likely increase the need for supplemental feeding. Calving was in progress.

Far West: Dry weather and high winds continued to challenge agriculture. No measurable rainfall has been reported in more than 90 days. The danger of wildfire was high across the region. Preparation for planting cotton, chilies and corn was under way. Winter wheat showed growth. Alfalfa was dormant

North: Soil moisture ranged from short to adequate. However, cold weather stifled growth and crops were generally in poor condition. Late-planted wheat responded to rains received between Christmas and New Years, and the crop was in fair to good condition. Supplemental feeding of livestock was ongoing. Hay supplies appear to be sufficient for the winter but there was not a surplus, and producers were searching for more supplies just in case of a harder-than-normal winter. Cattle looked very good going into the winter months. Stock-water ponds were getting low in some areas. Rangeland and pastures were in poor to fair condition.

Panhandle: The region was dry and windy with near-normal temperatures. More moisture was needed throughout the region. Soil-moisture levels were short for the most part. Producers were preparing fields for the spring plantings. Wheat varied from being in very poor to good condition, with most reporting fair to poor. Rangeland and pastures varied from very poor to good condition, with most reporting poor. Cattle were in good condition with continued supplemental feeding.

Rolling Plains: Dry conditions still persisted throughout the region. A good rain was needed to perk up the wheat crop. A strong winter cold front, with lows in the teens and highs around freezing, forced ranchers to put out extra hay for cows. Livestock remained in good

condition. Cow/calf producers were providing heavy supplemental feed. In some areas, the supplemental feed was all the cows had to eat. Rangeland and pasture conditions held steady through the dry spell. Stock-water ponds were drying up in some parts of the district. The cotton harvest neared completion, with most gins and producers reporting average to slightly above average yields. Many producers kept busy cutting cotton stalks and plowing up cotton fields. Other farmers left their cotton stalks in the field, planning to use no-till production to conserve moisture. Burn bans remained in effect in some counties.

South: From 1 inch to 1.75 of inches of rain fell in Atascosa County, which was just enough to help improve winter pastures a little but not enough to really bolster forage quantity. The rest of the district remained dry. Prospects for winter livestock grazing on winter forbs and winter annual grasses continued to decline. Supplemental feeding was at a high, and the body condition scores of cattle were fair. Cold nights, mild days and short to very short soil-moisture levels persisted throughout the entire region. In the northern part of the region, producers were doing limited planting, mostly of potatoes. In the western part of the region, producers who irrigated were actively applying water on cabbage, spinach, onions and other vegetables. In the southern part of the region, fall vegetables were progressing well and producers were preparing for spring planting.

South Plains: The region had highs in the 50s and 60s, with lows in the high teens to mid-20s. Soil moisture was short. Winter wheat was in fair condition. The condition of wheat stands was falling because of lack of moisture. Most wheat that emerged was irrigated, not dryland. Pastures and rangeland were in fair condition with rain needed to green up cool-season grasses. The danger of wildfire remained high because of dry conditions and low humidity. Livestock were in good condition and continued to receive supplemental feeding.

Southeast: Recent rains improved topsoil moisture in some areas. Rangeland was expected to improve from this moisture during the coming weeks. Land preparation for spring planting lowed due to dry conditions.

West Central: Days were mild with no significant rains. A few areas reported isolated showers. Soil-moisture levels remained extremely low, and there was very little field activity due to the dry conditions. The cotton harvest was complete with above-average yields being reported. Winter wheat was off to a poor start due to lack of moisture. Rangeland and pastures continued to decline. Stock-water tanks and ponds were drying out. Producers increased supplemental feeding of livestock.

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 December 31st, 2010, there were 159 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>

John Sutton, Texas Water Development Board, (512) 463-7988, fax (512) 463-9893, 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>

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

Michael Dunivan, Texas Forest Service, (210) 494-4631, 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/>

Thomas Walker, 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, (512) 936-7876, fax (512) 936-6776, website: <http://www.tdra.state.tx.us>

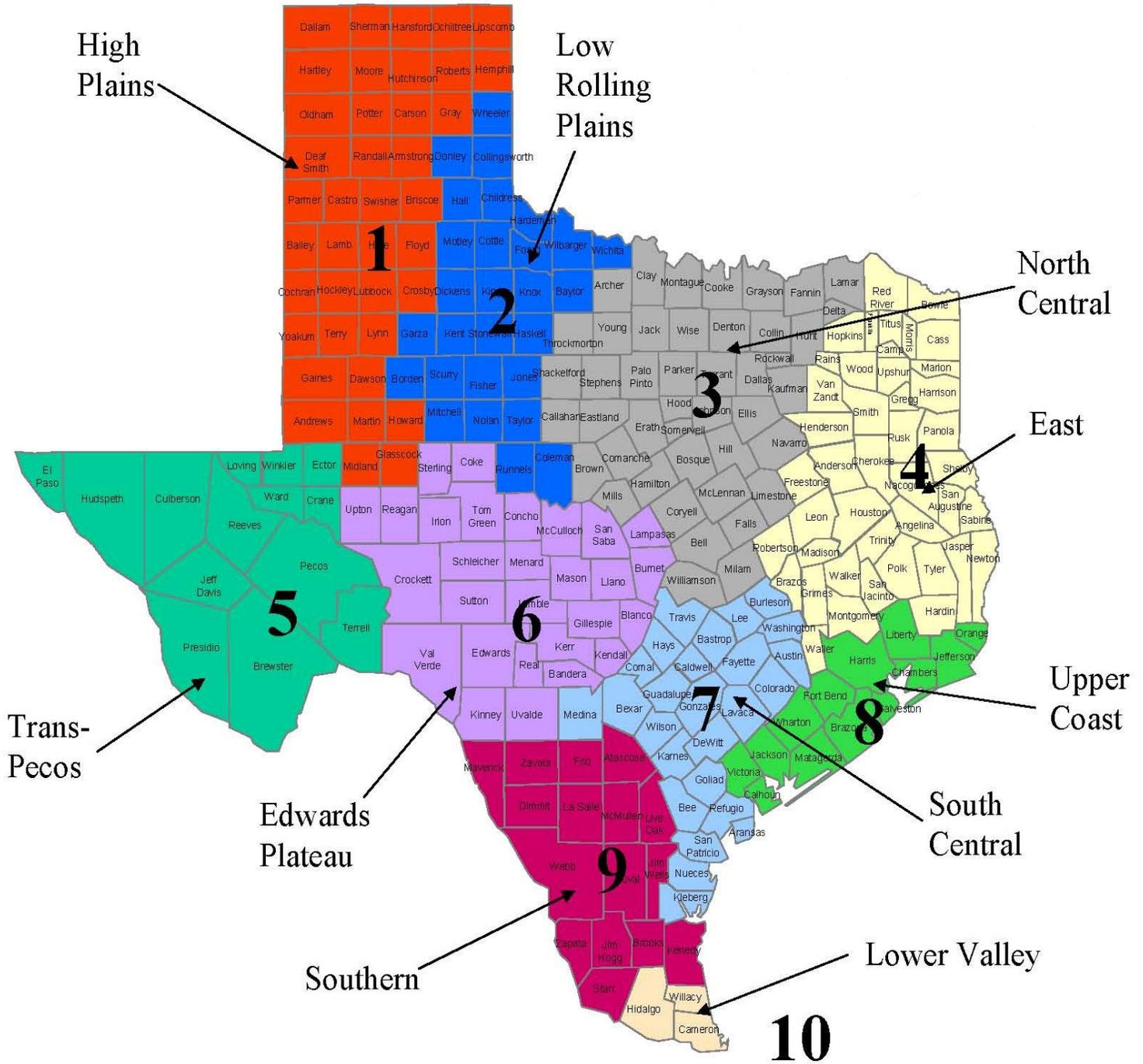
Marisa Callan, Texas Department of Housing and Community Affairs, (512) 475-3964, website: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

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
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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

