

**CHAPTER 7**  
**DROUGHT RESPONSE**  
**INFORMATION, ACTIVITIES, AND**  
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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## **7 REGIONAL DROUGHT RESPONSE**

Drought is a frequent and inevitable factor in the climate of Texas. The seven-year drought of record in the 1950s was a turning point in Texas history that led to the development of the Texas Water Development Board. Since then, Texas has faced numerous droughts, including the second worst and second-longest Statewide drought that began in August 2010 and lasted through October 2014. Widespread drought returned to much of the State in 2022, rivaling 2011 conditions and again illustrating drought's reoccurring threat to cause significant harm. Therefore, it is vital to plan for the effect that droughts will have on the use, allocation and conservation of water in the State.

Drought management measures have been incorporated as an increasingly important part of water planning at the local, regional and Statewide levels. In 2009, the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) published [Drought Management in the Texas Regional and State Water Planning Process](#), which examines the potential benefits and drawbacks of including drought management as a regional water management strategy.

Through the regional water planning process, requirements for drought management planning are found in Title 31 of the Texas Administrative Code (TAC), Part 10, Chapter 357, Subchapter D. Texas Statute reference §357.42 includes requirements regarding drought response information, activities, and recommendations. This Chapter examines these specific requirements and identifies drought impacts within the Region.

## 7.1 DROUGHT OF RECORD IN THE PLATEAU REGION

The severity of the most recent drought significantly impacted the lives of water users, providers and water managers who were hard-pressed to find solutions to critical supply and demand issues. The severity of the impacts varied, but the overriding sense of urgency to create workable strategies and solutions was acknowledged and acted upon Statewide. Therefore, it is critical in this planning cycle to continue to address the impact that drought has had and will continue to have on the future use, allocation and conservation of water in the State.

There are different types of drought that have been defined in various ways; however, these definitions fall into four primary categories: (1) meteorological, (2) agricultural, (3) hydrological and (4) socioeconomic drought. According to the American Meteorological Society, drought is a period of abnormally dry weather sufficiently long enough to cause a serious hydrological imbalance. The [State Drought Preparedness Plan](#) provides more specific and detailed definitions.

Meteorological drought is quantified by how dry it is (for example, a rain deficit) compared to normal conditions as well as the duration of the dry period. This is typically a region-specific metric, since factors affecting meteorological drought can vary so much in different regions. This type of drought does not necessarily impact water supply.

Agricultural drought looks at the effects of meteorological drought in terms of agricultural impacts. For example, evapotranspiration, soil moisture and plant stress are measures of agricultural drought, which account for vulnerability of crops through the various growth stages. This type of drought often leads to drought disaster declarations and, in many cases, is an indicator of an impending hydrological drought.

Hydrological drought is measured in terms of effects on surface and subsurface waters, such as reservoir stage and capacity, stream flow or groundwater levels in wells. Hydrological drought is usually defined on a river-basin or watershed scale. Hydrological droughts typically lag behind meteorological and agricultural droughts because it takes more time for the evidence of basin-wide impacts to manifest. This type of drought typically always impacts water supplies and is the focus of the TWDB's water planning process.

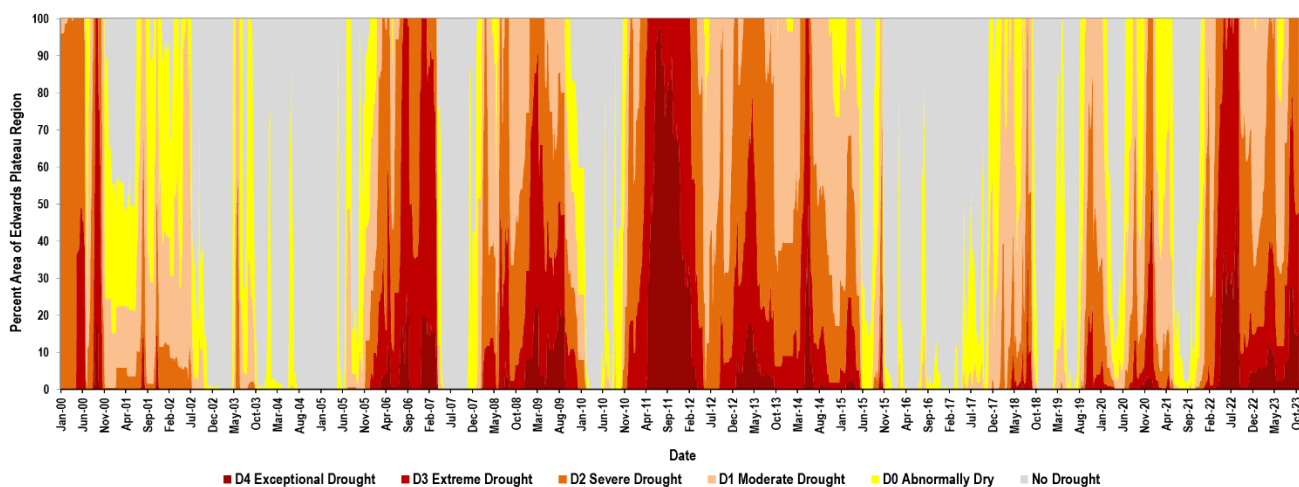
Socioeconomic drought occurs when physical water needs affect the health, safety, and quality of life of the general public or when the drought affects the supply and demand of an economic product. An example of socioeconomic drought is when the demand for an economic product (such as hydroelectric power) exceeds supply due to a weather-related deficit. Typically, demand for a product increases with population growth and per capita consumptions, and supply increases due to efficiency technology and the construction of new water projects. If both are increasing, the rate of change between supply and demand determines the level of socioeconomic drought. However, regardless of the rate of change, when demand exceeds supply, vulnerability is magnified by water shortages during drought.

Several climatological drought indicators have been formulated in order to quantify drought. The Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI) was developed in 1965 and is currently used by many Federal and State agencies. The PDSI attempts to measure the duration and intensity of the long-term drought-inducing circulation patterns. Long-term drought is cumulative, so the intensity of drought during the current month is dependent on the current weather patterns plus the cumulative patterns of previous months. PDSI values can lag oncoming drought by several months. The PDSI quantifies drought using values ranging between -6.0 (driest) to 6.0 (wettest), and the TWDB uses the PDSI to monitor State drought

conditions “Extreme drought” conditions have a PDSI between -6.0 and -4.0, and “severe drought” conditions have a PDSI between -3.99 and -3.0.

An accumulated area graph of the weekly PDSI categories for the Edwards Plateau Region of Texas is included as Figure 7-1. Since 2000, the Plateau Region experienced recurring extreme drought conditions in 2006-2007, 2008-2009, 2011-2015, 2018-2019, and 2020-2024.

The Plateau Region experienced the longest sustained periods of extreme drought between November 2010 and May 2012, between September 2012 and May 2015, and between November 2022 and January 2024.



**Figure 7-1. Drought in the Edwards Plateau Region of Texas, 2000-2023**  
**Source: U.S. Drought Monitor**

The climate of the Plateau Region is intermediate to the more humid climates of regions to the east and drier climates of regions to the west. The combination of high temperatures, high potential evapotranspiration and intermediate rainfall totals combine to produce a semi-arid climate with drought conditions during all or parts of some years (Bomar, 1995).

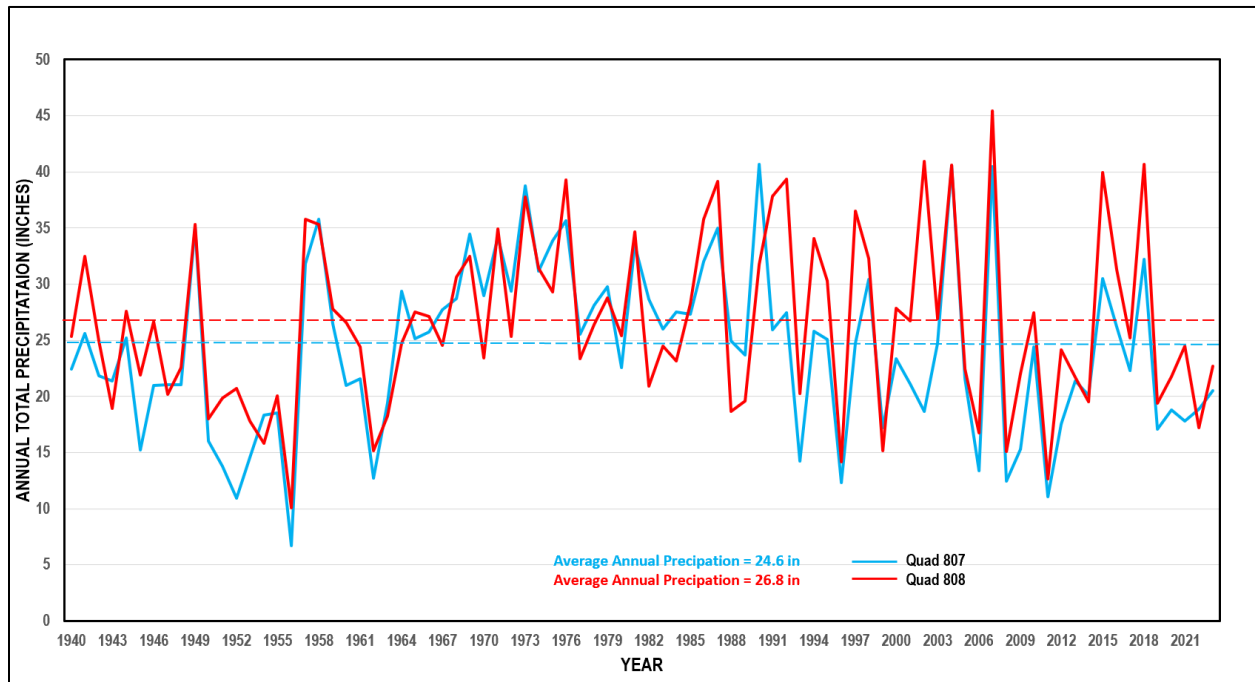
### 7.1.1 Precipitation Indicator

Although residents are generally accustomed to the highly variable climatic conditions typical of the Plateau Region, the relatively low rainfall and the accompanying high levels of evaporation underscore the necessity of developing plans that respond to potential disruptions in the supply of groundwater and surface water caused by drought conditions.

For this planning cycle, the drought of the 1950s is considered the drought of record (DOR). The DOR and recent droughts can be compared using historic precipitation, stream flow records, spring discharge and water level measurements in wells for locations that have accumulated data measurements since the 1940s.

Precipitation data for quadrangles 807 (west Plateau Region - portions of Edwards, Kinney and Val Verde Counties) and 808 (east Plateau Region - portions of Bandera, Kerr, Real, and Medina Counties) from

1940 through 2023 are shown on Figure 7-2. Average annual rainfall for these quadrangles is 24.6 and 26.8 inches, respectively. These data indicate that the DOR in the 1950s was associated with seven years of below average rainfall (5-inch deficit per year). The most recent drought indicates a trend toward below average annual rainfall between 2018 and 2023. Years with below average rainfall have a deficit of about 8 to 10 inches for the year.



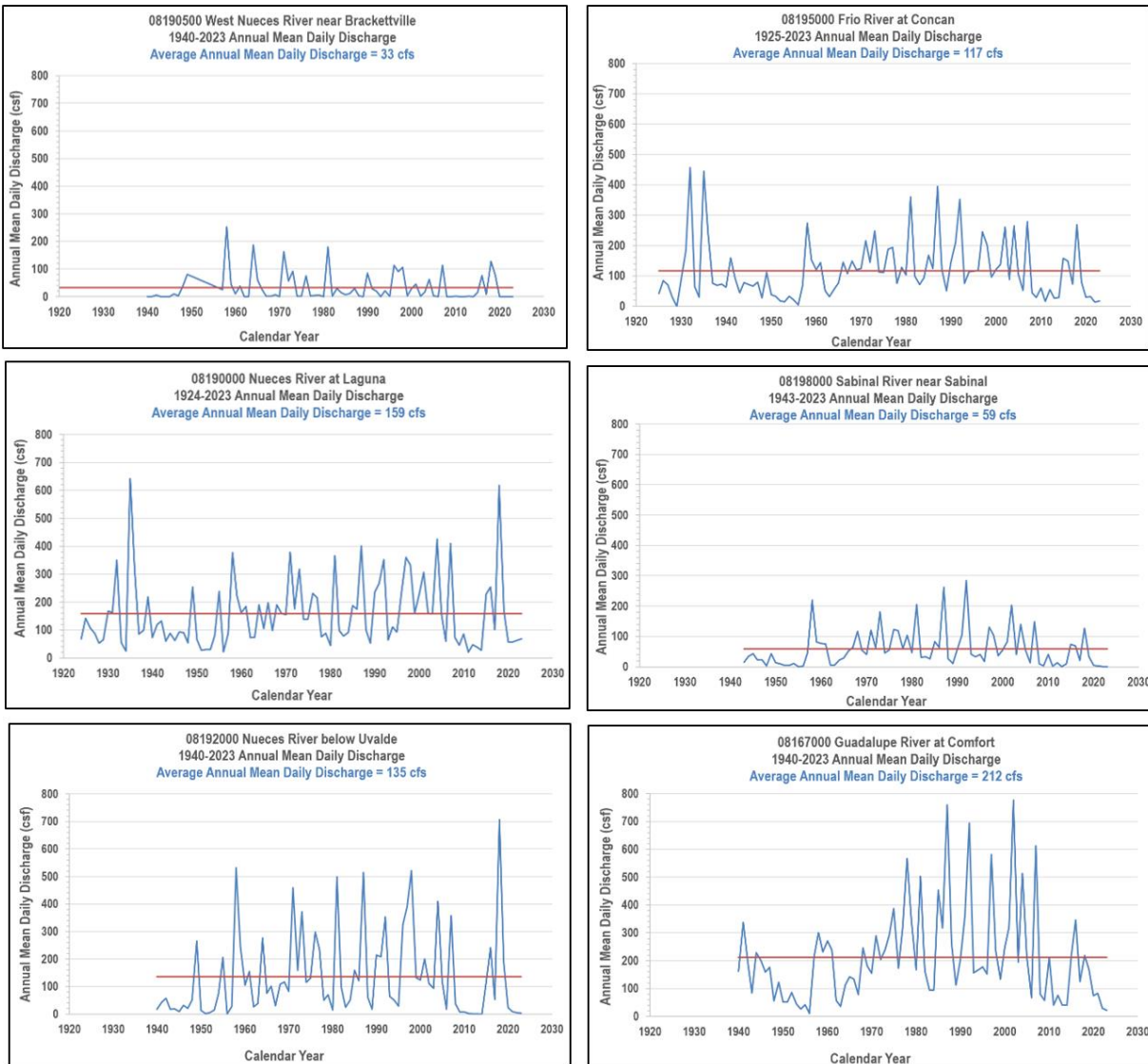
**Figure 7-2. Annual Precipitation, 1940-2023**  
**Source: TWDB**

### 7.1.2 Stream Flow Indicator

The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) has six stream gages located in or proximal to the Plateau Region that have flow data measurements extending back to 1943 (Figure 7-3). Graphs of the annual mean daily discharge (by calendar year) are presented with the average annual mean daily discharge, in cubic feet per second (cfs).

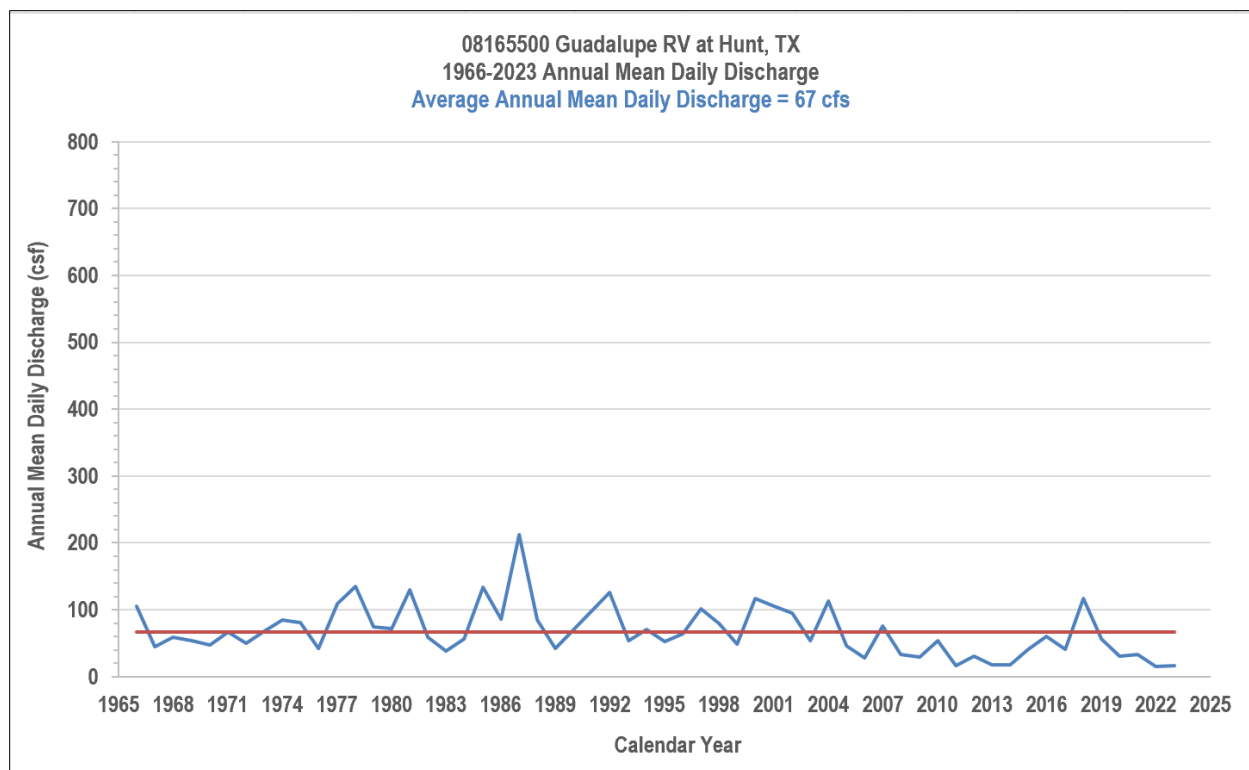
Some general comparisons can be made between the gaging stations during the DOR. It appears that the DOR affected stream flow in the Nueces River basin by 1950, whereas in the Frio and Guadalupe River basins, stream flow was not impacted until after 1950. Since the western counties in the Region average about two inches of rainfall less than the eastern counties, this impact lag is somewhat intuitive but worth noting, nonetheless. The stream flow data in the Frio, Sabinal and Guadalupe River basins illustrate this more readily than the gages located in the Nueces River basin. Additionally, the gaging data highlights the gradual decrease in stream flow that can be seen during the DOR in the 1950s compared to the sudden decrease of flow that is evident in the more recent flow data. These graphs show that recent stream flow in all river basins decreased suddenly compared to the DOR in the 1950s, and that the decreased flow occurred nearly simultaneously in all basins. Generally, it appears that the prolonged drought of 2022 is having a more intense and rapid impact on stream flow; however, it is uncertain what portion of the decrease in stream flow can be attributed to a decrease in base flow due to increased groundwater

pumping. Also, except for perhaps the West Nueces River gaging station near Brackettville (the most arid station location), there does not appear to be a historical decrease in flow since year 2000 as has been observed in the Upper Colorado River basin (Figure 7-4).



**Figure 7-3. Historic Streamflow Gaging Data (1925-2023)**

Source: USGS



**Figure 7-4. Guadalupe River at Hunt Discharge (1965-2023).**  
Source: USGS

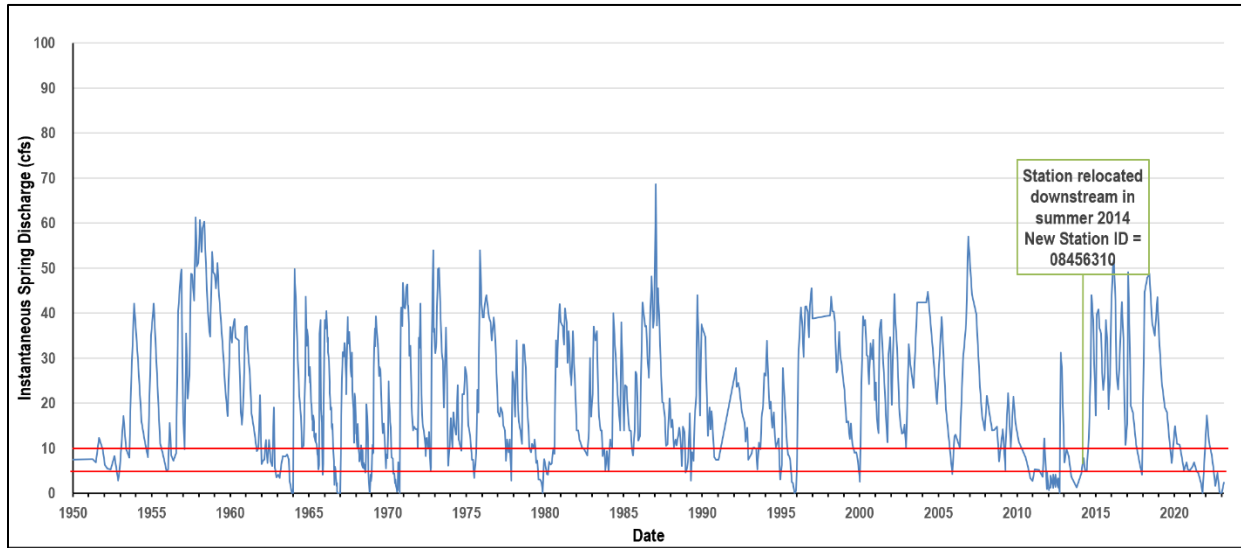
### 7.1.3 Spring Discharge Indicator

Historic spring flow at USGS station 0846300 – Las Moras Springs at Brackettville, is available for years 1895 through 2023. This data is shown on Figure 7-5. The available data are instantaneous discharge measurements which do not necessarily occur on a regularly scheduled interval. Spring discharge has dropped below five cfs numerous times since 1952 (1953, 1956, 1963, 1964, 1966, 1967, 1969, 1971, 1976, 1978, 1980, 1989, 1995, 1996, 2000, 2006, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2018, 2022, and 2023). The periods with flow less than five cfs typically lasted for up to 3 months. The only exception is a ten-month period between July 2012 and May 2013. A few zero measurements have also occurred (1964, 1967, 1971, 1996, 2022 and 2023). Most of these occurrences appear to have lasted less than six weeks.

San Felipe Springs discharge data were not used because the construction of Lake Amistad in 1968 permanently affected the Spring discharge measurements and therefore comparison between the most recent drought and the DOR would be difficult. According to the USGS webpage, San Felipe Springs (08452800) approved data is undergoing revisions at the monitoring location, making data collection impossible until further notice.

It is uncertain how much of the low flow at Las Moras can be attributed to the anthropological impacts on drought indicators, such as increased groundwater pumping due to drought conditions and increased demands since the 1950s.



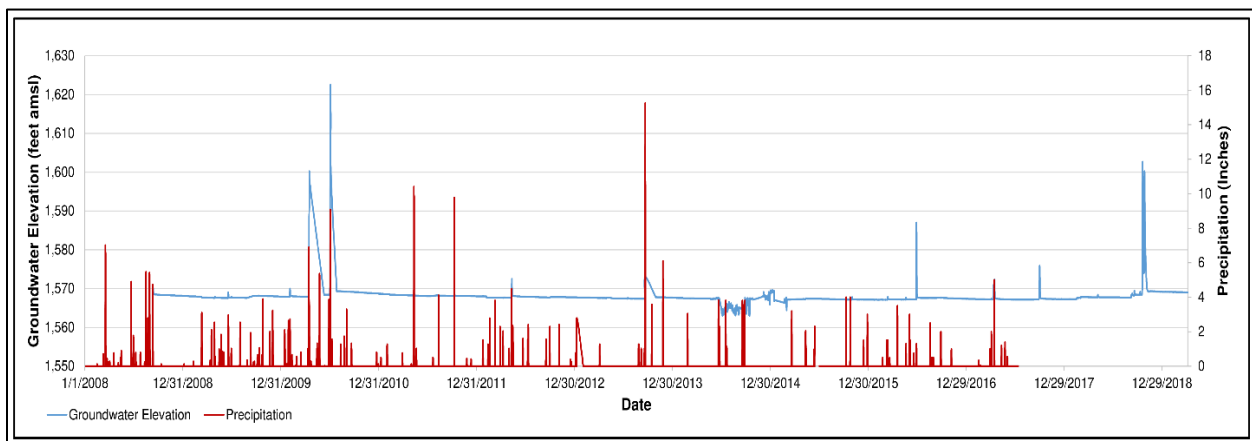


**Figure 7-5. Historic Discharge Measurements at Las Moras Springs**  
 Source: U.S. Geological Survey

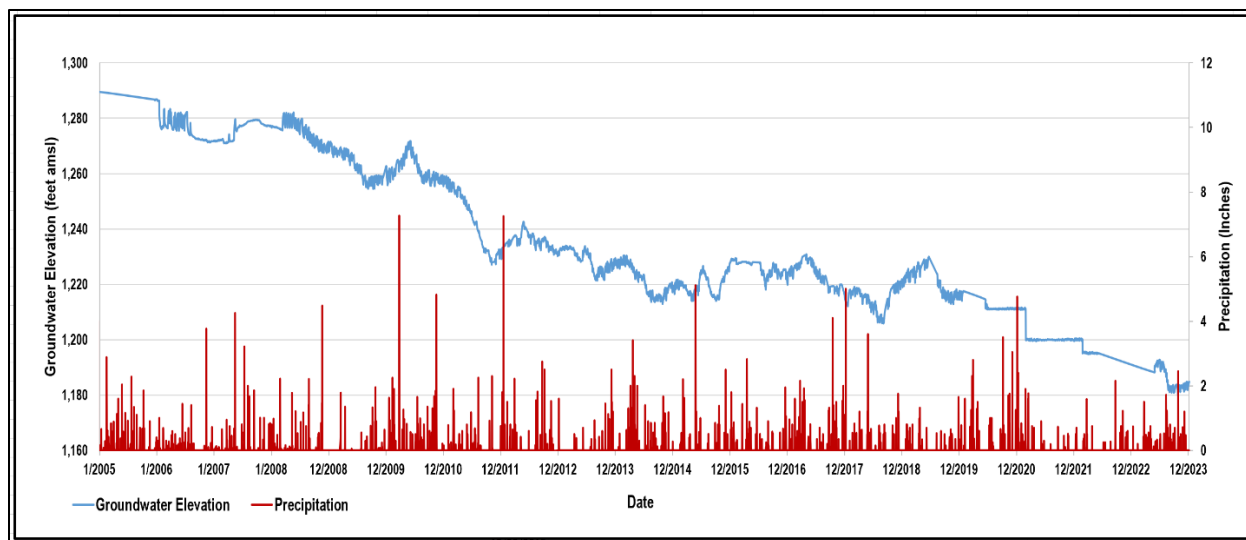
### 7.1.4 Groundwater Level Indicator

Figure 7-6 and Figure 7-7 compare daily water level data from existing real-time monitoring wells with daily precipitation data from nearby NWS Cooperative Weather Stations to illustrate aquifer response to precipitation events. Figure 7-6 represents a well in the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) Aquifer in Val Verde County. The data suggests that response time in the aquifer is quite rapid and occurs within a few days. Note that the water levels in the aquifer remain relatively constant, which suggests that there is not much competition for groundwater near this location. The recent severe drought does not appear to have affected water levels significantly at this location.

Figure 7-7 shows a well completed in the Trinity Aquifer in Real County near Leakey, Texas. The data suggests that response time in the Aquifer is quite rapid and occurs within a few days. Total water level decline in the well is over 100 feet in a span of 18 years. This is likely due to both drought conditions and population growth which both contribute to increased pumping.



**Figure 7-6. Daily Groundwater Elevation and Daily Precipitation, Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Val Verde County**



**Figure 7-7. Daily Groundwater Elevation and Daily Precipitation, Trinity Aquifer Real County**

### 7.1.5 Plateau Region Drought of Record

For this planning cycle, the drought of the 1950s is declared the Drought of Record.

The catalyst for the recent drought can be attributed primarily to rainfall deficit (meteorological drought). The hydrological drought that has occurred because of rainfall deficit is evident in the decrease in stream flow and spring discharge data that has been presented. However, the greatest unknown factor that these data collectively point to is the impact that can be attributed to anthropological factors.

The hydrological drought (impact on surface waters and groundwater) is a result of both meteorological and socioeconomic drought. To reiterate, socioeconomic drought occurs when physical water needs affect the health, safety, and quality of life of the general public or when the drought affects the supply and demand of an economic product. An example of socioeconomic drought is when the demand for an economic product (such as hydroelectric power) exceeds supply due to a weather-related deficit. Typically, demand for a product increases with population growth and per capita consumptions, and supply increases due to efficiency technology and the construction of new water projects. If both are increasing, the rate of change between supply and demand determines the level of socioeconomic drought. However, regardless of the rate of change, when demand exceeds supply, vulnerability is magnified by water shortages during drought.

In future planning cycles, the PWPG encourages studies to quantify how much anthropological factors exacerbate drought severity. Suggested areas of investigation include base flow studies, sub-watershed scale water balance calculations, rainfall deficit quantification, and historical pumping.

## 7.2 UNCERTAINTY AND DROUGHTS WORSE THAN THE DROUGHT OF RECORD

As mandated by TAC 357.42, the RWPGs must address water supply needs during a repeat of the drought of record. During plan development, the generated values of planning factors (supplies, demands, population) all have associated ranges of uncertainty. RWPGs may choose to consider scenarios and/or qualitatively address uncertainty and Drought Worse than the Drought of Record (DWDOR) in their region. This section discusses the scenarios and/or qualitative assessments that can be used to more explicitly recognize the relative planning uncertainties and options to help mitigate those risks.

Texas's strategy of planning for a repeat of the 1950s drought is no longer enough. While historic evidence identifies droughts that were longer and more severe than the Drought of Record, contemporary data points to a likely future of increasing drought severity. A report by [Texas 2036 and the Office of the State Climatologist at Texas A&M University](#) projects that rising average temperatures and greater rainfall variability will contribute to a future with more severe droughts. Given this lengthy history and projected future, Texas needs to think differently about how we plan and prepare for drought.

During this current planning cycle, the Drought Preparedness Council (DPC) encourages regional water planning groups to consider planning for drought conditions worse than the drought of record, including scenarios that reflect greater rainfall deficits and/or higher surface temperatures. A DWDOR will inflict greater economic damage on industries critical to our continued prosperity.

The Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) recognizes that the failure to plan for uncertainties invites economic devastation and therefore they have chosen to evaluate several options to help mitigate risks that may be associated with the DWDOR: (1) use of the Management Supply Factor (MSF), (2) information from water providers that have developed long-range plans that have assessed their system's capacity under conditions worse than the drought of record, and (3) demand reductions achieved through the implementation of drought contingency plans.

Variability related to population and water demand projections is a major area of concern for the Plateau Region. The planning group made available the draft population and water demand summary tables to municipalities, water providers, county judges, and non-municipal water-use representatives and solicited all entities within the Region to submit desired changes to the projections. Based on the survey responses, draft projections were revised and sent to the TWDB for review. The TWDB approved the submitted revisions requests with the understanding that in the case of Laughlin Airforce Base, the request would be modified to 1,640 held constant throughout the planning horizon. The final population projections for the Region (to include all revisions) are in Chapter 2, Section 2.1.2, and 2.2.

The PWPG considered how to address planning for uncertainty and how such planning could be included for the purposes of the *2026 Plateau Water Plan*. The following items were considered:

- Studies that have been performed that inform upon uncertainties in needs and water availability within the Region, such studies will be noted and considered in the identification of measures taken and their effect. For the purposes of this *Plan*, there are no long-range plans and/or studies available that have been performed to inform upon uncertainties in water needs and water availability within the Region. However, the planning group supports the funding and development of such studies.

- The PWPG recognizes uncertainties both in the projections of population and water demand. As such, WMSs have been developed and recommended that contemplate such uncertainties.
- The *Plan* also identifies potential emergency interconnects that could be useful for informing on decisions of supply availability should DWDOR occur (Section 7.4).

Table 7-1 below lists the water user groups most likely associated with measures that may provide some additional water supply capacity in the event of a near-term DWDOR. The table is divided into two parts: (1) key assumptions, analyses, strategies, and projects that are already incorporated directly into this *Plan*, which provide recommendations that go beyond just meeting identified water needs anticipated during drought of record conditions, and (2) potential additional types of measures and responses that are not part of the recommendations in this *Plan*, but that would likely be available to certain water providers/users in the event of the near-term onset of a DWDOR and that would be capable of providing additional, potential capacity for those water providers and user to withstand a DWDOR.

**Table 7-1. WUGs/WWPs Most Likely Associated with Measures of Additional Water Supply During Drought Worse Than Drought-of-Record**

WUG/WWP Name	Applicable water supplies	Included in the adopted RWP									Measures that may be available beyond the recommended strategies identified in the adopted RWP									
		Built-in conservative modeling or other assumptions			Additional recommendations for additional supplies beyond those needed to meet needs						Demand-management measures				Water supply measures					
		1-year safe yield used in surface water modeling***	Utilizing MAG based upon a DFC developed under drought conditions	No return flows	Maximum permitted amounts	Recharge plus 0.1 volume of water in storage. See report: Occurrence of Significant River Alluvium Aquifers in the Plateau Region (2010)	Certain WMSs include 'management supply'	Entities that have recommended WMSs that provide water supplies beyond any identified water needs	Other	Other	Other	Implement drought management (not a recommended WMS)	Other	Other	Other	Implement recommended GW WMSs but earlier than shown in the plan	Pursue new direct potable reuse to extend existing supplies	Pursue new brackish desalination	Other	Other
City of Bandera	Trinity Aquifer		▪					▪				▪				▪		▪		
Bandera County FWSD #1	Trinity Aquifer		▪					▪				▪				▪		▪		
City of Rocksprings	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Pecos Valley & Trinity Aquifer		▪					▪				▪				▪		▪		
City of Kerrville	Trinity Aquifer, Guadalupe Run-of-River		▪		▪			▪				▪				▪		▪		
Kerrville South Water	Trinity Aquifer		▪									▪								

**Table 7-1. (continued) WUGs/WWPs Most Likely Associated with Measures of Additional Water Supply During Drought Worse Than Drought-of-Record**

WUG/WWP Name	Applicable water supplies	Included in the adopted RWP									Measures that may be available beyond the recommended strategies identified in the adopted RWP									
		Built-in conservative modeling or other assumptions			Additional recommendations for additional supplies beyond those needed to meet needs						Demand-management measures			Water supply measures						
		1-year safe yield used in surface water modeling***	Utilizing MAG based upon a DFC developed under drought conditions	No return flows	Maximum permitted amounts	Recharge plus 0.1 volume of water in storage. See report: Occurrence of Significant River Alluvium Aquifers in the Plateau Region (2010)	Certain WMSs include 'management supply'	Entities that have recommended WMSs that provide water supplies beyond any identified water needs	Other	Other	Other	Implement drought management (not a recommended WMS)	Other	Other	Other	Implement recommended GW WMSs but earlier than shown in the plan	Pursue new direct potable reuse to extend existing supplies	Pursue new brackish desalination	Other	Other
City of Brackettville	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Pecos Valley & Trinity Aquifer, Rio Grande Run-of-River		▪		▪			▪				▪						▪		
Fort Clark Springs MUD	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Pecos Valley & Trinity Aquifer		▪					▪				▪						▪		
City of Camp Wood	Nueces Run-of-River				▪							▪				▪				

**Table 7-1. (continued) WUGs/WWPs Most Likely Associated with Measures of Additional Water Supply During Drought Worse Than Drought-of-Record**

WUG/WWP Name	Applicable water supplies	Included in the adopted RWP									Measures that may be available beyond the recommended strategies identified in the adopted RWP									
		Built-in conservative modeling or other assumptions			Additional recommendations for additional supplies beyond those needed to meet needs						Demand-management measures			Water supply measures						
		1-year safe yield used in surface water modeling***	Utilizing MAG based upon a DFC developed under drought conditions	No return flows	Maximum permitted amounts	Recharge plus 0.1 volume of water in storage. See report: Occurrence of Significant River Alluvium Aquifers in the Plateau Region (2010)	Certain WMSs include 'management supply'	Entities that have recommended WMSs that provide water supplies beyond any identified water needs	Other	Other	Other	Implement drought management (not a recommended WMS)	Other	Other	Other	Implement recommended GW WMSs but earlier than shown in the plan	Pursue new direct potable reuse to extend existing supplies	Pursue new brackish desalination	Other	Other
City of Leakey	Frio River Alluvium Aquifer					•		•				•				•				
Del Rio Utilities	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Pecos Valley & Trinity Aquifer, Rio Grande Run-of-River		•		•							•				•				

## 7.3 CURRENT DROUGHT PREPARATIONS AND RESPONSE

As mandated by 31 TAC 357.42(a)&(b), this section of the *Plan* summarizes and assesses all preparations and drought contingency plans (DCPs) that have been adopted by municipalities and GCDs within the Plateau Region. The summary includes specific triggers used to determine the onset of each defined drought stage and the associated response actions developed by local entities to decrease water demand during the drought stage.

Because of the range of conditions that affected the more than 4,000 water utilities throughout the State in 1997, the Texas Legislature directed the TCEQ to adopt rules establishing common drought plan requirements for water suppliers. As a result, TCEQ requires all wholesale public water providers, retail public water suppliers serving 3,300 connections or more, and irrigation districts to submit drought contingency plans every five years. The deadline for these plans to be submitted to TCEQ was May 1, 2024. In addition, many GCDs also have DCPs that provide education and voluntary action recommendations.

Wholesale water providers and retail public water suppliers serving less than 3,300 connections are required to prepare and adopt updated DCPs. Plans are required to be made available for inspection upon request but are not required to be submitted to the TCEQ. [Guidelines as to what should be included in each DCP](#) can be found on TCEQ's website.

DCPs are intended to establish criteria to identify when water supplies may be threatened and the actions that should be taken to ensure these potential threats are minimized. A common feature of drought contingency plans is a structure that allows increasingly stringent drought response measures to be implemented in successive stages as water supply decreases and water demand increases. This measured or gradual approach allows for timely and appropriate action as a water shortage develops. The onset and termination of each implementation stage should be defined by specific "triggering" criteria. Triggering criteria are intended to ensure that: 1) timely action is taken in response to a developing situation, and 2) the response is appropriate to the level of severity of the situation. Each water-supply entity is responsible for establishing its own DCP that includes appropriate triggering criteria and responses.

Figure 7-1 illustrates that drought conditions during this current planning period (2021-2025) were more severe than during the previous planning period (2016-2020). As a result, water utilities and conservation districts implemented stringent measures during this recent period. Most entities declared severe or critical stages of drought throughout the warmer/dryer part of 2024. Four public water supply systems were reported by TCEQ to have less than 100-day water supply in August of 2024. These systems escalated to an emergency state of drought. Fort Clark Springs MUD is the only system of the four that has recently reverted back to a moderate condition. Systems within Bandera County are still experiencing extreme drought conditions. The Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District has moved to a 40% reduction in pumping and continues to monitor water levels within the aquifers.

### 7.3.1 Drought Response Triggers

Drought response triggers should be specific to each water supplier and should be based on an assessment of the water user's vulnerability. In some cases, it may be more appropriate to establish triggers based on a supply source volumetric indicator such as a lake surface elevation or an aquifer static water level. Similarly, triggers might be based on supply levels remaining in an elevated or ground storage tank within



the water distribution system; this is not a recommended approach, as the warning of supply depletion would be only three to four days. Triggers based on demand levels can also be effective, if the demands are very closely and frequently monitored. Whichever method is employed, trigger criteria should be defined on well-established relationships between the benchmark and historical experience. If historical observations have not been made, then common sense must prevail until such time that more specific data can be presented.

### **7.3.2 Surface Water Triggers**

Surface water sources are among the first reliable indicators of the onset of hydrologic drought. Diminished spring discharge and stream flow, for example, can be monitored daily by city, county, and State agencies. Of interest, however, are the levels to which spring discharge and stream flow are reduced before the onset of drought is declared and appropriate response measures are initiated in the Region. Cities that rely exclusively on spring flow for municipal water are particularly vulnerable to drought-induced reductions in discharge, especially if alternative sources of supply have not been developed to make up potential shortfalls created by lower discharge. As an operating definition of hydrologic drought, it is recommended that reductions of spring discharge between 25 percent and 33 percent be considered effective hydrologic drought triggers in the Plateau Region.

### **7.3.3 Groundwater Triggers**

Groundwater triggers that indicate the onset of drought are not as easily identified as factors related to surface-water systems. This is attributable to (1) the rapid response of stream discharge and reservoir storage to short-term changes in climatic conditions within a region and within adjoining areas where surface drainage originates, and (2) the typically slower response of groundwater systems to recharge processes. Although climatic conditions over a period of one or two years might have a significant impact on the availability of surface water, aquifers of the same area might not show comparable levels of response for much longer periods of time, depending on the location and size of recharge areas in a basin, the distribution of precipitation over recharge areas, the amount of recharge, and the extent to which aquifers are developed and exploited by major users of groundwater. However, karstic formations such as the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) may produce rapid recharge rates in aquifers.

Except for the Trinity Aquifer of Bandera and Kerr Counties, all other aquifers in the rural counties are unlikely to experience significant water-level declines, based on comparisons between projected water demand, aquifer recharge and storage. In these areas, water levels are expected to remain constant or relatively constant over the 50-year planning period (see Figure 7-6). Observation wells in major recharge areas and in areas adjacent to municipal well fields in the rural counties might provide a sufficient number of points to monitor water levels, provided that water-level measurements are made on a regular basis for long periods of time. Water levels below specified elevations for a pre-determined period might be interpreted to be reasonable groundwater indicators of drought conditions in any basin.

Basins that do not receive enough recharge to offset natural discharge and pumpage may be depleted of groundwater (e.g., mined). This is especially the case with the Trinity Aquifer of Bandera and Kerr Counties. The rate and extent of groundwater mining in any area are related to the timeframe and the extent to which withdrawals exceed recharge. In such basins, water levels may fall over long periods of time, eventually reaching a point at which the cost of lifting water to the surface becomes an economical concern. Thus, water levels in such areas may not be a satisfactory drought trigger. Instead, communities

might consider the rate at which water levels decline in response to increased demand as a sufficient indicator of drought. Entities that utilize groundwater triggers include Bandera, Rocksprings, Ingram, Loma Vista Water Supply, Brackettville and Fort Clark Springs MUD.

### **7.3.4 System Capacity Triggers**

Because of the above described problems with using water levels as drought-condition indicators, several municipal water-supply entities in the Plateau Region that rely on groundwater generally establish drought-condition triggers based on levels of demand that exceed a percentage of the systems' production capacity. Rocksprings, Ingram (Aqua Texas), Loma Vista Water System, Camp Wood, City of Del Rio and City of Kerrville utilize drought triggers that consider demand and system capacity components.

### **7.3.5 Municipal and Wholesale Water Provider Drought Contingency Plans**

The TCEQ requires all retail public water suppliers serving 3,300 connections or more and wholesale public water providers to submit a drought contingency plan to prepare and respond to water shortages. The amended *Title 30, Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 288* became effective on December 6, 2012 addressing TCEQ's guidelines and plan requirements. The [forms for wholesale public water providers, retail public water suppliers and irrigation districts](#) are available on the TCEQ's website.

Drought contingency plans for municipal uses by public water suppliers must document coordination with the regional water planning groups to ensure consistency with the regional water plans. The following entities have prepared drought contingency plans:

- City of Bandera
- City of Kerrville
- City of Rocksprings
- City of Camp Wood
- City of Ingram (Aqua Texas)
- Loma Vista Water System (Aqua Texas)
- City of Brackettville
- Fort Clark Springs Municipal Water District
- City of Del Rio (Wholesale Water Provider)

A list of entities, their supply source, specific triggers and actions, for each drought stage is provided in Table 7-2. A DCP was not provided to the Regional Planning Group by Laughlin AFB.

**Table 7-2. Municipal Mandated Drought Triggers and Actions**

Water Supply Entity	Water Supply Source	Drought Trigger	Drought Stage and Response				
			Mild	Moderate	Severe	Critical	Emergency
City of Bandera	Trinity	Multi-stage drop in water levels in the Dallas Street Municipal Well.	Voluntary conservation May 1 - Sept 30.	Depth to water between 516 and 531 feet.	Depth to water between 532 and 546 feet.	Depth to water between 547 and 566 feet.	Depth to water below 567 feet, or system failure.
			Voluntary usage reduction.	Reduce demand by 20%.	Reduce demand by 30%.	Reduce demand by 40%.	Reduce demand by 50%.
City of Rocksprings	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Based on a comparison of the daily water demand to the static water level of Well #3.	Depth to water reaches 429 feet for 3 consecutive days.	Depth to water reaches 445 feet for 3 consecutive days.	Depth to water reaches 461 feet for 3 consecutive days.	N/A	Depth to water reaches 477 feet for 3 consecutive days.
			Reduce demand by 10%.	Reduce demand by 20%.	Reduce demand by 30%.	N/A	Notify state emergency response officials.
City of Kerrville	Upper Guadalupe River and Trinity Aquifer	Based on a comparison of demand and system's safe operating capacity, which is the maximum amount of water the city can safely deliver to the distribution system. Safe capacity is calculated using the following sources: 1) the WTP, 2) ASR, 3) City wells and 4) other potable sources.	Seven-day average demand exceeds 65% of the system's safe operating capacity.	Seven-day average demand exceeds 75% of the system's safe operating capacity.	Seven-day average demand exceeds 85% of the system's safe operating capacity.	Seven-day average demand exceeds 95% of the system's safe operating capacity.	Seven-day average demand exceeds 100% of the system's safe operating capacity.
			Implement landscape watering schedule; no operation of fountains/pools.	Landscape watering with hand held hose only; non-essential water use prohibited.	No application for new, additional, or expanded water service connections.	Landscape watering with potable water prohibited.	Allocation of available water; notify state emergency response officials.
City of Ingram (Aqua Texas)	Trinity	Demand-based triggers include the following components: 1) percent of water treatment capacity, 2) total daily demand as percent of pumping capacity, 3) storage capacity (tank level) and 4) well pump run time.	Voluntary conservation late Spring and Summer.	75%, tank level within 4 feet of low-level lockout, 16 hours.	85%, tank level within 3 feet of low-level lockout, 20 hours.	95%, tank level reaches low-level lockout, 22 hours.	
			Reduce demand by 5%.	Reduce demand by 10%.	Reduce demand by 20%.	Reduce demand by 40%.	N/A

**Table 7-2. (continued) Municipal Mandated Drought Triggers and Actions**

Water Supply Entity	Water Supply Source	Drought Trigger	Drought Stage and Response				
			Mild	Moderate	Severe	Critical	Emergency
City of Ingram (Aqua Texas)	Purchased supply	Supply-based triggers are utilized for systems Aqua provides water from either a district, authority or wholesale supplier.	Upon notification by district, authority, or wholesale supplier, Aqua may implement equivalent stage and restrictions.				
City of Brackettville	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Multi-stage drops in water levels in city well.	Depth to water reaches 50 feet or less while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 65 feet or less while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 85 feet or less while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 110 feet or less while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	
			Reduce demand by 10%.	Reduce demand by 15%.	Reduce demand by 25%.	N/A	Notify state emergency response officials.
Fort Clark Springs Municipal Water District	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Multi-stage drops in water levels in municipal well.	Depth to water reaches 25 feet or more from ground level while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 35 feet or more from ground level while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 50 feet or more from ground level while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Depth to water reaches 75 feet or more from ground level while pumping (based on 10-day moving average).	Fort Clark MUD will recognize an emergency exists based on the “critical” stage criteria.
			Voluntary - reduce demand by 10%.	Reduce demand by 15%.	Reduce demand by 25%.	N/A	Notify state emergency response officials.
City of Camp Wood	Spring flow from Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Base on system capacity limits.	Low distribution pressure for more than 6 hours.	Demand exceeds 70% of safe operating capacity (based on seven-day average).	Demand exceeds 80% of safe operating capacity (based on seven-day average).	Demand exceeds 90% of safe operating capacity (based on seven-day average).	Major system failures or supply contamination.
			Voluntary - reduce demand by 6%.	Reduce demand by 6%.	Reduce demand by 11%.	Reduce demand by 20%.	Reduce demand by 30%.

**Table 7-2. (continued) Municipal Mandated Drought Triggers and Actions**

Water Supply Entity	Water Supply Source	Drought Trigger	Drought Stage and Response				
			Mild	Moderate	Severe	Critical	Emergency
City of Del Rio	San Felipe Springs Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Water levels in Bedell Street Storage Reservoirs are less than a designated depth; San Felipe Spring flow drops below a specific flow rate.	Water levels are less than 30 feet; San Felipe Spring flow is less than 40 mgd.	Water levels are less than 25 feet; San Felipe Spring flow is less than 30 mgd.	Water levels are less than 20 feet; San Felipe Spring flow is less than 25 mgd.	Water levels are less than 15 feet; San Felipe Spring flow is less than 20 mgd.	N/A
			Reduce demand to 95% of the 30-day average prior to initiation.	Reduce demand to 90% of the 30-day average prior to initiation.	Reduce demand to 80% of the 30-day average prior to initiation.	Critical (Stage 4) is characterized by an emergency situation. Notify state emergency response officials.	Notify state emergency response officials.
Loma Vista Water Supply (Aqua Texas)	Trinity	Demand-based triggers include the following components: 1) percent of water treatment capacity, 2) total daily demand as percent of pumping capacity, 3) storage capacity (tank level) and 4) well pump run time.	Voluntary conservation late Spring and Summer.	75%, tank level within 4 feet of low-level lockout, 16 hours.	85%, tank level within 3 feet of low-level lockout, 20 hours.	95%, tank level reaches low-level lockout, 22 hours.	
			Reduce demand by 5%.	Reduce demand by 10%.	Reduce demand by 20%.	Reduce demand by 40%.	N/A
	Purchased supply	Supply-based triggers are utilized for systems Aqua provides water from either a district, authority or wholesale supplier.	Upon notification by district, authority, or wholesale supplier, Aqua may implement equivalent stage and restrictions.				

### 7.3.6 Groundwater Conservation District Drought Contingency Plans

A discussion of the creation and the goals of the four GCDs formed in the Plateau Region are discussed in more detail in Chapter 5, Section 5.3.7. This section will focus on summarizing drought management by the Districts.

Four districts are currently in operation within the planning region:

- [Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District](#)
- [Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District](#)
- [Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District](#)
- [Real-Edwards Conservation and Reclamation District](#)

Groundwater Conservation Districts are required to define management goals that specifically address drought conditions within their groundwater management plans. These are delineated via management objectives and performance standards. DCPs have also been adopted by three of the four GCDs in the Plateau Region. The following are the four District’s drought management objectives.

#### Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District

Management Objective 1 – Record the Palmer Drought Severity Index each month, post the drought stage and any appropriate drought restrictions outlined in the Drought Management Plan as adopted in October 2013.

Management Objective 2 – Evaluate groundwater availability each year by monitoring water levels of the aquifer from monitor wells within Bandera County.

The District has implemented a drought management plan to aid in groundwater conservation and is designed to reduce pumpage of the aquifer during the different drought stages. The triggers and actions incorporated into the drought plan are summarized below. These five drought stages are mandated restrictions for permitted wells and recommended restrictions for exempt wells.

#### Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District Drought Triggers and Actions

Stage & Description	1 – Mild	2 – Moderate	3 – Severe	4 – Extreme	5 - Exceptional
Trigger	Stages are triggered by the U.S. Drought Monitor but can be adjusted at the discretion of the District when aquifer levels, rainfall and river flow conditions warrant.				
Conservation Goal (percent reduction in pumpage)	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%

**Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District**

Management Objective 1 – Monitor drought conditions by reviewing aquifer data monthly and declaring drought stages based on the District’s defined drought triggers.

Management Objective 2 – The District will monitor and consider the Lower Trinity drought index wells (HGCD Monitor Well #2, HGCD Monitor Well #18, COK Mack Holliman, and Aqua Texas Kelly Street, Center Point).

Management Objective 3 – The District will also monitor and consider the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI) and the Guadalupe River Flow Rate at Kerrville in initiating drought stages.

The District has implemented a drought management plan to aid in groundwater conservation and is designed to reduce pumpage of the aquifer during the different drought stages. The triggers and actions incorporated into the drought plan are summarized below.

**Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District Drought Triggers and Actions**

Stage & Description	1 – Mild	2 – Moderate	3 – Severe	4 – Extreme
Trigger	1,420 feet amsl	1,410 feet amsl	1,400 feet amsl	1,390 feet amsl
Conservation Goal (percent reduction in pumpage)	10%	20%	30%	40%

The HGCD Drought Index Levels which are the average water level in four selected monitor wells (HGCD MW #5 Middle Trinity, HGCD MW # 7 Middle Trinity, HGCD MW #11 Middle Trinity, and County Agriculture Barn). Drought stages may be initiated at the discretion of the District depending on the ability of the City of Kerrville to draw surface water from the Guadalupe River.

These four drought stages invoke mandated restrictions for permitted wells and recommended restrictions for exempt wells.

**Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District**

Management Objective – Once a month, the District will download the latest drought information from the National Weather Service – Climate Prediction Center website. A report on the drought data obtained from the National Weather Service will be included in the regular monthly meeting agenda and retained in the meeting minutes kept at the District office.

**Real-Edwards Conservation and Reclamation District**

Management Objective – Curtailment of Groundwater Withdrawal. To accomplish this objective, the annual amount of groundwater permitted by the District for withdrawal from the portion of the aquifers located within the District may be curtailed during periods of extreme drought in the recharge zones of the aquifers or because of other conditions that cause significant declines in groundwater surface elevations. Such curtailment may be triggered by the District’s Board of Directors based on the groundwater elevation measured in the District’s monitoring well(s) and/or stream flow measurements along with other indices such as rainfall and soil moisture. District staff currently monitors three locations

along the Frio River and its tributaries and two locations on the Nueces River. A weir box will be placed on Old Faithful Spring and measurements will be routinely taken at that location. The triggers and actions incorporated into the drought plan are summarized below.

**Real-Edwards Conservation and Reclamation District Drought Triggers and Actions**

Stage & Description	1 – Mild	2 – Moderate	3 – Severe	4 – Extreme
Trigger	PDSI -1 or less	PDSI -2 or less	PDSI -3 or less	PDSI -4 or less
Conservation Goal (percent reduction in pumpage)	Voluntary	10%	20%	30%

The Palmer Drought Severity Index, which is an index based on regional meteorological and hydrological data such as rainfall, temperature and soil moisture content will be used as the primary triggering criteria for the initiation and termination of the drought plan.

The four drought stages are mandated restrictions for permitted wells during stages 2, 3, and 4 and recommended restrictions for exempt wells.

**7.3.7 Description of Current Preparations for Drought in the Region Including Unnecessary or Counterproductive Drought Response**

The following discussion is new to the sixth cycle of regional water planning, as it was added late during the fifth cycle by House Bill 807. Within this new subsection, the Region must consolidate and present: (1) a description of how water suppliers in the Region identify and respond to drought conditions (this may include information from local drought contingency plans), and (2) a summary of drought response efforts that the Region has identified as unnecessary or counterproductive.

Table 7-2 is a list of entities, their supply source, specific triggers and actions, for each drought stage found within a total of 10 collected drought contingency plans within the Region. These plans are also accessible at their specified websites. In addition, Section 7.3.6 summarizes drought management by the four GCDs formed within the Plateau Region. The information provided within Table 7-2 and Section 7.3.6 informs upon how water suppliers within the Region identify and respond to drought conditions.

The Plateau Region is comprised mainly of rural communities, where neighboring communities are miles apart, if not often in separate counties. Due to the distance between communities within the Region, the planning group has not identified any unnecessary or counterproductive drought responses. The PWPG does not feel that any of the DCPs within the Region cause public confusion or impede any drought response efforts at this time.



## 7.4 EXISTING AND POTENTIAL EMERGENCY INTERCONNECTS

According to Texas Statute §357.42(d), (e) regional water planning groups are to collect information on existing major water infrastructure facilities that may be used in the event of an emergency shortage of water. Pertinent information includes identifying the potential user(s) of the interconnect, the potential supplier(s), the estimated potential volume of supply that could be provided, and a general description of the facility. Texas Water Code §16.053(c) requires information regarding facility locations to remain confidential. This section provides general information regarding existing and potential emergency interconnects among water user groups within the Plateau Region.

The RWPG is required to gather information pertinent to major water infrastructure facilities that are currently or could potentially be utilized during emergency water shortages. Major water infrastructure facilities within the Plateau Region were identified through a survey process to better evaluate existing and potentially feasible emergency interconnects. There are no existing emergency interconnects. There are only three potential interconnects that have been identified within the Plateau Region in the current planning cycle, as shown below. Regarding the City of Leakey, the City has acquired a well that was once privately owned. This well is not currently being used by the City but would be added to the City’s supply in a state of emergency.

**Potential Emergency Interconnects to Major Water Facilities**

Entity Providing Supply	Entity Receiving Supply
City of Kerrville	Cherokee Mobile Home Park
City of Del Rio	Laughlin AFB and the Landings at Laughlin
City of Leakey	City of Leakey

## **7.5 EMERGENCY RESPONSES TO LOCAL DROUGHT CONDITIONS OR LOSS OF MUNICIPAL SUPPLY**

Texas Statute §357.42(d) requires regional water planning groups to evaluate potential temporary emergency water supplies for all county-other WUGs and municipalities that have 2030 projected populations less than 7,500 that rely on a sole source of water. The purpose of this evaluation is to identify potential alternative water sources that may be considered for temporary emergency use in the event that the existing water-supply sources become temporarily unavailable due to extreme hydrologic conditions such as emergency water right curtailment, unanticipated loss of reservoir conservation storage, or other localized drought impacts.

This section provides potential solutions that should act as a guide for municipal water users that are most vulnerable in the event of a loss of supply. Entities evaluated for emergency responses to local drought conditions or loss of municipal supply were assumed to have 180 days or less of remaining supply. This review was limited and did not require technical analyses or evaluations following in accordance with 31 TAC §357.34.

In the Plateau Region, there are 22 municipal and county-other WUGs that have a 2030 projected population of less than 7,500. Of those 22 WUGs, seven entities rely upon a sole source of water. Six of the sole source WUGs rely on groundwater, and one WUG relies on surface water (City of Camp Wood).

Potential emergency water-supply sources that might be used by small sole-source municipal WUGs or county-other WUGs include the following:

- New local groundwater well
- Emergency interconnect
- Use of other named local supply
- Trucked-in water delivery
- Brackish groundwater limited treatment
- Brackish groundwater desalination
- Release from upstream reservoir
- Curtailment of upstream and/or downstream water rights

Based upon personal communication with the WUGs within the Plateau Region, the addition of a new local groundwater well was identified for all entities as a potential emergency water supply source. The Bandera County FWSD #1 (Bandera county-other) would also consider the curtailment of proximal water rights, and the City of Bandera would also consider trucked-in water delivery as a feasible option under emergency conditions. The entities along with feasible potential emergency water supply options have been included in Table 7-3.

**Table 7-3. Emergency Responses to Local Drought Conditions**

Entity						Implementation Requirements										
Water User Group Name	County	2024 Population Served by Water System (per TCEQ)	2024 Service Connections (per TCEQ)	2030 Projected Population	2030 Projected Water Demand (AF/year)	Drill additional groundwater wells	Brackish groundwater limited treatment	Brackish groundwater desalination	Emergency interconnect	Other named local supply	Trucked-in water	Type of infrastructure required	Entity providing supply	Other local entities required to participate/ coordinate	Emergency agreements/ arrangements already in place?	
City of Bandera	Bandera	3,066	1,070	1,949	347	▪			▪		▪	Well	City	N/A	N/A	
Bandera County FWSD #1	Bandera	1,092	438	1,074	342	▪			▪		▪	Well	District	N/A	N/A	
City of Rocksprings	Edwards	1,857	574	666	175	▪			▪		▪	Well	City	N/A	N/A	
Kerrville South Water	Kerr	Data Not Available		3,600	457	▪					▪	Well	Aqua Texas	N/A	N/A	
City of Brackettville	Kinney	2,570	831	1,077	528	▪					▪	Well		N/A	N/A	
Fort Clark Springs MUD	Kinney	1,200	989	1,372	727	▪					▪	Well		N/A	N/A	
City of Camp Wood	Real	1,380	460	339	147	▪			▪		▪	Well	City	N/A	N/A	
City of Leakey	Real	1,758	586	210	143	▪			▪		▪	Well	City	N/A	N/A	
Laughlin Air Force Base	Val Verde	4,010	497	1,640	969	▪			▪		▪	Well	City of Del Rio	N/A	N/A	
<b>County-Other</b>																
Bandera River Ranch 1	Bandera	1,038	346	Data Not Provided		▪			▪		▪	Well	WSC	N/A	N/A	
Medina WSC	Bandera	774	258			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Flying L Ranch PUD	Bandera	987	329			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Barksdale WSC	Edwards	279	93			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Center Point North WS	Kerr	270	90			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Center Point Taylor System	Kerr	531	177			▪			▪		▪		Well	District	N/A	N/A
Cedar Springs MHP	Kerr	144	48			▪			▪		▪		Piping	Ingram Oaks Park	N/A	N/A
Heritage Park WS	Kerr	87	29			▪			▪		▪		Piping	Aqua Texas	N/A	N/A
Oak Ridge Estates WS	Kerr	123	41			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Verde Park Estates	Kerr	213	71			▪			▪		▪		Piping	Elmwood MHP	N/A	N/A
Vista Hills	Kerr	48	16			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Westwood WS	Kerr	339	113			▪			▪		▪		Well		N/A	N/A
Windwood Oaks WS	Kerr	60	20			▪			▪		▪		Piping	The Woods Sub.	N/A	N/A

To qualify for emergency funds that are earmarked for emergency groundwater supply wells, entities must have a drought plan in place and be currently listed as an entity that is limiting water use to avoid shortages. This list is updated weekly by the [TCEQ's Drinking Water Technical Review and Oversight Team](#) and can be found on the TCEQ's website.

There is some assistance available through the Texas Department of Agriculture and the Texas Water Development Board. There are requirements, deadlines, and a specific application process. Contact the TWDB by e-mail at [Financial\\_Assistance@twdb.texas.gov](mailto:Financial_Assistance@twdb.texas.gov), or call 512-463-7853. Contact the Texas Department of Agriculture, Community Development Block Grants, or call 512-936-7891. Funding is limited.

TCEQ offers a variety of resources pertaining to drought, current priority calls, current drought conditions, water conservation and more. Those [TCEQ Guidance resources](#) are located on their website.

## 7.6 REGION-SPECIFIC MODEL DROUGHT RESPONSE RECOMMENDATIONS AND MODEL CONTINGENCY PLANS

As mandated by TAC 357.42(c)&(i), the RWPGs shall develop drought response recommendations regarding the management of existing groundwater and surface water sources in the RWPA designated in accordance with §357.32. The RWPGs shall make drought preparation and response recommendations regarding the development of, content contained within, and implementation of local drought contingency plans. The RWPGs shall develop region-specific model drought contingency plans that shall be presented in the RWP which shall be consistent with 30 TAC Chapter 288 requirements.

Regional drought planning expands the conceptualization and application of drought planning by specific entities to encompass the entire Plateau Region. The approach utilized in developing a region-specific drought plan will consider the following: (1) all regional groundwater and surface water sources, (2) current drought plans that are being utilized by user entities within the Region, and (3) current monitoring stations within the Region that have evolved since the previous planning cycle.

The goals of this approach are: (1) to gain a comprehensive view of what particular resources are being monitored by entities within the Region, (2) determine which resources are not being monitored, (3) determine which users do not fall under the umbrella of existing DCPs, (4) identify potential monitoring stations with publicly accessible real-time data that currently exist, and (5) determine how these data can be utilized for the water-user groups that do are not subject to existing DCPs, and ultimately (6) development of a regional model drought contingency plan.

As discussed in Section 7.3, several GCDs, towns/cities and various public supply systems have written drought management / contingency plans and have provided them for inclusion in this *Plan*.

### 7.6.1 Regional Groundwater Resources and Monitoring

The six groundwater resources identified within the Plateau Region and their contribution to total regional groundwater supply are:

- Austin Chalk (2%)
- Edwards (BFZ) (4%)
- Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) (2%)
- Edwards-Trinity (Plateau), Pecos Valley & Trinity (76%)
- Ellenburger-San Saba (1%)
- Frio River Alluvium (1%)
- Nueces River Alluvium (2%)
- Trinity (13%)

The aquifer contribution to the regional supply calculation is based upon Table 3-1. Water Source Availability. This data is provided by the TWDB for regional planning purposes.

Current drought contingency plans were detailed in Section 7.3.5 and Table 7-2. State well numbers of the monitoring wells used by municipal entities that utilize groundwater triggers are shown in Table 7-4. A map of these locations is included as Figure 7-8.

**Table 7-4. Current Municipal Trigger Monitoring Wells**

Water Supply Entity	County	Water Supply Source	Well ID
City of Rocksprings	Edwards	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	55-63-803 Sharp Well
City of Bandera	Bandera	Trinity	69-24-102 Dallas Street Well
Fort Clark Springs MUD	Kinney	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	70-45-504 Well #1
City of Brackettville	Kinney	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	70-45-601 Well #1

Previous Plateau Regional Water Plans identified wells that could potentially be used for drought monitoring.

7-5 provides a selection of groundwater trigger wells included in the 2011, 2016 and 2021 Plans, with an updated status and period of record.

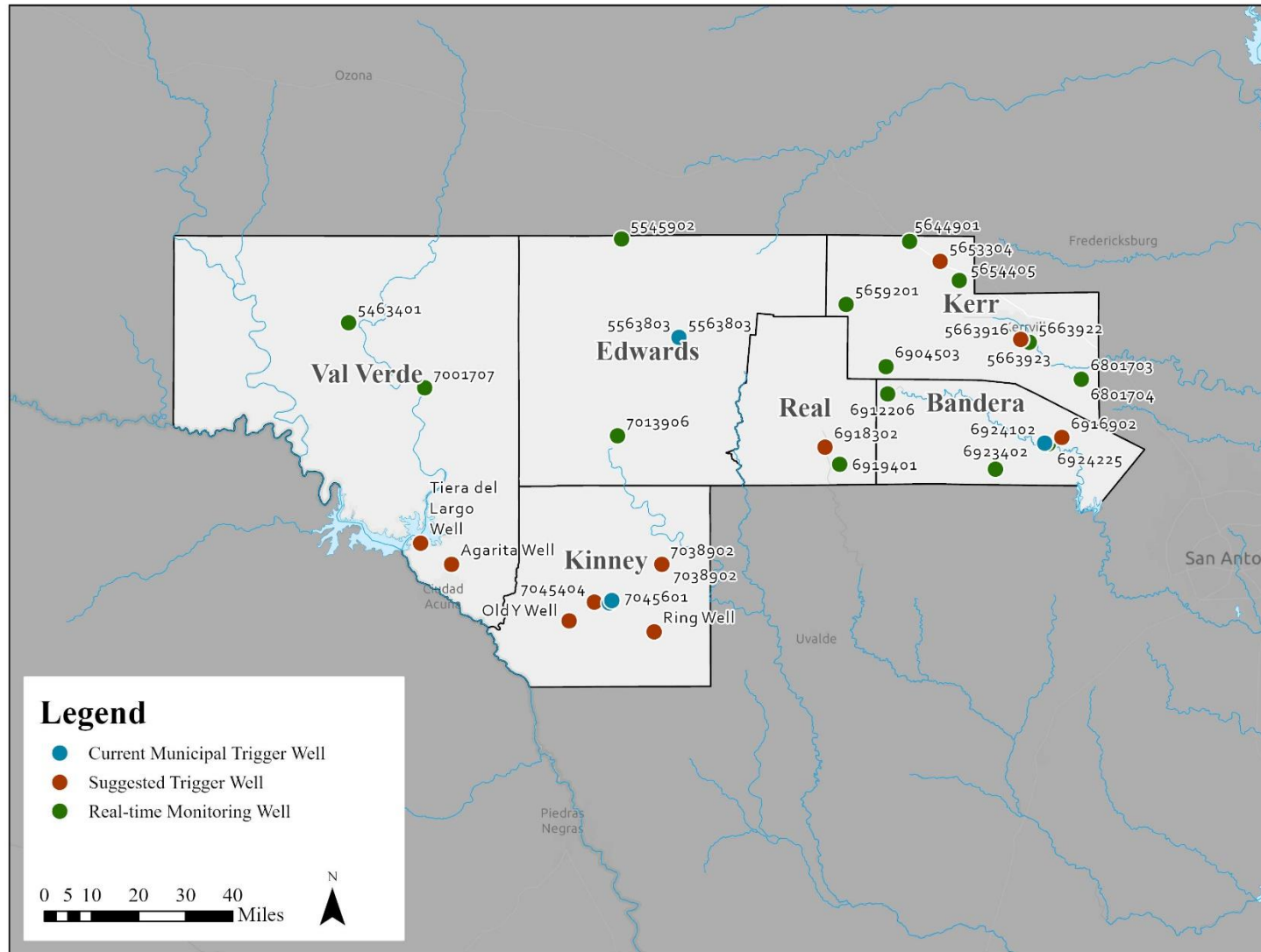
**Table 7-5. RWP Groundwater Trigger Monitoring Wells**

Aquifer	County	Well ID	Monitoring Agency	Period of Record	Current Status
Trinity	Bandera	69-16-902 (Purple Sage Well)	Unknown	Unknown	Inactive -
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Edwards	55-63-803 (City of Rocksprings)	TWDB	1953-2022	Active
Trinity	Kerr	56-63-916	HGCD (Donna Drive Well)	1977-2019	Currently active in HGCD network
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Kerr	56-53-304	Not being monitored	1966-1998	Inactive - Replaced by HGCD network
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Kinney	Ring Well	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Edwards (BFZ)	Kinney	70-38-902	TWDB	1973-2020	Active
Austin Chalk	Kinney	70-45-404	TWDB	1937-2009	Unknown
Frio River Alluvium	Real	69-18-302 (City of Leakey)	Unknown	Unknown	Unknown
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Val Verde	Old Y Well	City of Del Rio	2013-2014	Inactive
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Val Verde	Agarita Well	City of Del Rio	Unknown	Inactive
Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Val Verde	Tiera del Largo Well	City of Del Rio	Unknown	Inactive

The TWDB has a component of their website called Water Data for Texas (like the U.S. Geological Survey’s NWIS server) that is a collective of real-time monitoring data from both groundwater wells and reservoir stage-capacity gages. Table 7-6 is a summary of the 18 groundwater wells located within the Plateau Region. These locations are included on Figure 7-8.

**Table 7-6. Currently Active (Real-Time) Monitoring Wells**  
**Source: Water Data for Texas**

County	State Well ID	Aquifer	Aquifer Type	Entity/Cooperator	Data Transmission	Latest Transmission Date as of 9/2024
Bandera	<a href="#">6912206</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Unconfined	U.S. Geological Survey	Satellite	9/18/2024
Bandera	<a href="#">6923402</a>	Trinity	Confined	U.S. Geological Survey	Satellite	8/5/2024
Bandera	<a href="#">6924225</a>	Trinity	Confined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Edwards	<a href="#">5545902</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Unconfined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Edwards	<a href="#">7013906</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Unconfined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5644901</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5654405</a>	Trinity	Confined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/18/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5659201</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5663922</a>	Trinity	Confined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5663923</a>	Trinity	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/18/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">5663924</a>	Trinity	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/18/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">6801703</a>	Trinity	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">6801704</a>	Trinity	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	9/17/2024
Kerr	<a href="#">6904503</a>	Trinity	Confined	Headwaters GCD	Satellite	5/12/2024
Kinney	<a href="#">7038902</a>	Edwards (Balcones Fault Zone)	Unconfined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Real	<a href="#">6919401</a>	Trinity	Confined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Val Verde	<a href="#">5463401</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Unconfined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024
Val Verde	<a href="#">7001707</a>	Edwards-Trinity (Plateau)	Unconfined	Texas Water Development Board	Satellite	9/17/2024



**Figure 7-8. Regional Monitoring and Trigger Wells**



### 7.6.2 Regional Surface Water Resources and Monitoring

The five surface water basins identified within the Plateau Region and their contribution to total regional surface water supply are:

- Colorado River Basin (<1%)
- Rio Grande Basin (79%)
- Nueces River Basin (10%)
- Guadalupe River Basin (10%)
- San Antonio River Basin (<1%)

The basin contribution to the regional supply calculation is based upon the WAM Run 3 (Full Authorization) availability numbers. Surface water features that are actively being monitored by an entity within the Plateau Region are detailed in Table 7-7.

**Table 7-7. Surface Water Sources Currently Monitored by Regional Entities**  
**Source: Plateau Region Drought Contingency Plans**

Entity	County	Water Supply Source	Station ID	Measuring Agency	Period of Record	Current Measurement Frequency
City of Del Rio	Val Verde	San Felipe Springs	08-4530.00 (gage on creek)	IBWC	1931-2024	15 minutes
Headwaters GCD	Kerr	Guadalupe River	08166200 Guadalupe River at Kerrville	USGS	1986 -2024	Daily
Real-Edwards CRD	Real	Frio River	Fulgham's crossing, Leakey Springs crossing, Mill Creek crossing, Frio River Place crossing	RECRD	Unknown	Monthly
Real-Edwards CRD	Real	Frio River - West Prong	Rancho Real crossing, Kent Creek crossing	RECRD	Unknown	Monthly
Real-Edwards CRD	Edwards	Nueces River	McDonald's Crossing, Nueces River Dam	RECRD	Unknown	Monthly
Real-Edwards CRD	Edwards	South Llano River	Telegraph crossing, Hwy 377 at Evergreen School crossing	RECRD	Unknown	Monthly

The only station that is utilized as an active trigger is San Felipe Springs. The other stations are included in this table to present a complete list of surface water locations that are currently being monitored within the Region. Note that the Guadalupe River is an optional trigger for HGCD. The Frio and Nueces crossings that are measured by the RECRD are posted on their website monthly.

A list of all currently active stream flow, spring flow and reservoir stage gaging stations are listed in Table 7-8. The USGS stations have real-time data that is publicly accessible online. These locations are shown on Figure 7-9.

**Table 7-8. Currently Active Surface Water Gaging Locations**  
Source: Water Data for Texas

County	Station ID	Station Name	Agency
<b>Rio Grande Basin</b>			
Val Verde	<a href="#">8449100</a>	Dolan Creek abv Devils River near Comstock, TX	USGS
Val Verde	<a href="#">8447410</a>	Pecos River near Langtry, TX	USGS
Val Verde	<a href="#">08-3772.00</a>	Rio Grande at Foster Ranch near Langtry, TX	IBWC
Val Verde	<a href="#">08-4508.00</a>	International Amistad Reservoir Storage	IBWC
Val Verde	<a href="#">08-4530.00</a>	San Felipe Creek	IBWC
Kinney	<a href="#">8456300 and 8456310</a>	Las Moras Springs at Brackettville, TX (main channel)	USGS
<b>Nueces River Basin</b>			
Kinney	<a href="#">8190500</a>	W Nueces River near Brackettville, TX	USGS
Edwards	<a href="#">818999010</a>	Nueces River near Barksdale, TX	USGS
Real	<a href="#">8194840</a>	Frio River at Leakey, TX	USGS
Bandera	<a href="#">8197936</a>	Sabinal River below Mill Creek near Vanderpool, TX	USGS
<b>Guadalupe River Basin</b>			
Kerr	<a href="#">8165300</a>	North Fork Guadalupe River near Hunt, TX	USGS
Kerr	<a href="#">8165500</a>	Guadalupe River at Hunt, TX	USGS
Kerr	<a href="#">8166000</a>	Johnson Creek near Ingram, TX	USGS
Kerr	<a href="#">8166140</a>	Guadalupe River above Bear Creek at Kerrville, TX	USGS
Kerr	<a href="#">8166200</a>	Guadalupe River at Kerrville, TX	USGS
Kerr	<a href="#">8166250</a>	Guadalupe River near Center Point, TX	USGS
<b>San Antonio River Basin</b>			
Bandera	<a href="#">817887350</a>	Medina River at Patterson Road at Medina, TX	USGS
Bandera	<a href="#">8178880</a>	Medina River at Bandera, TX	USGS
Bandera	<a href="#">8178980</a>	Medina River above English Creek Spring near Pipe Creek, TX	USGS
Medina	<a href="#">8179500</a>	Medina Lake near San Antonio, TX	USGS

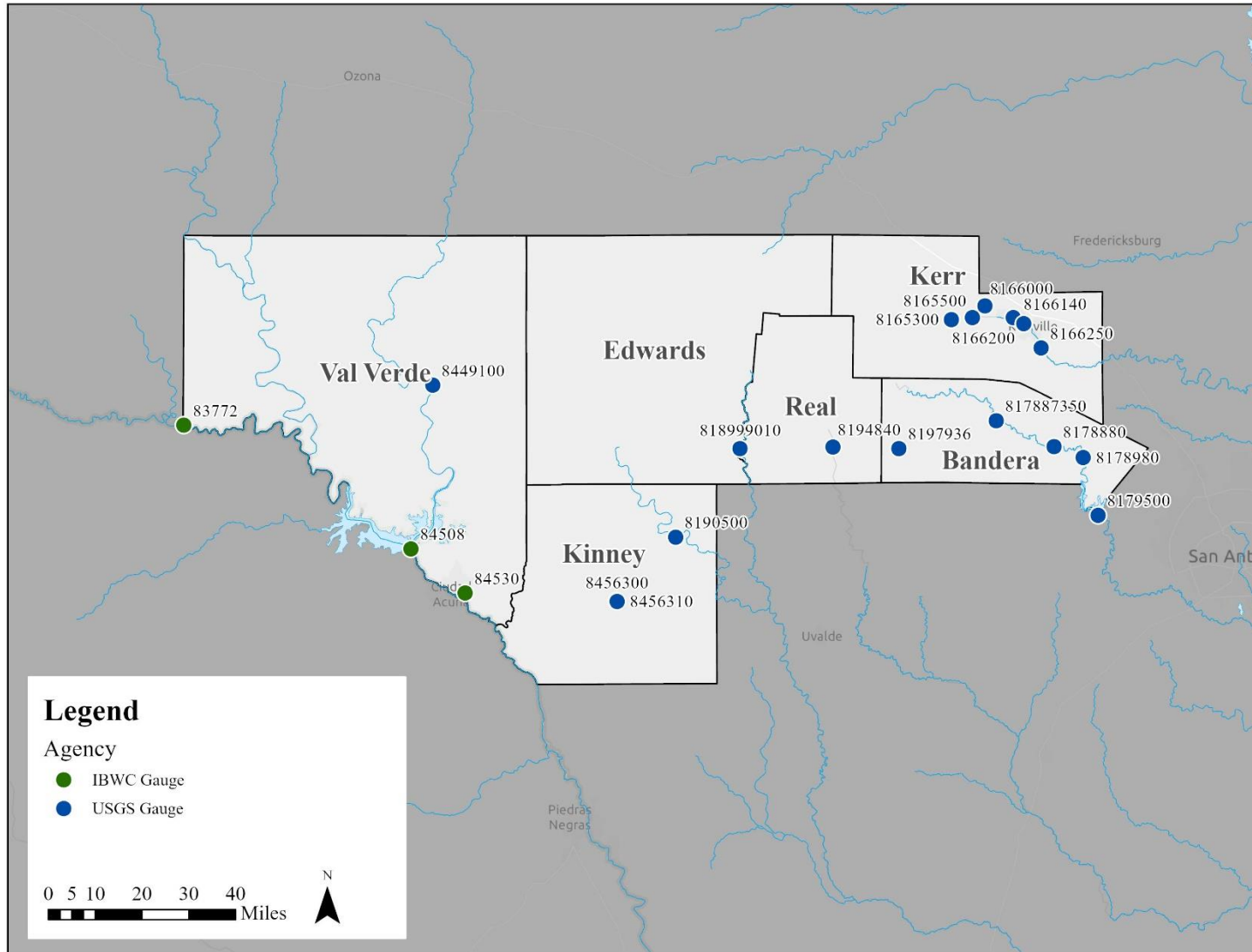


Figure 7-9. Currently Active Surface Water Gaging Locations

### 7.6.3 Regional Model Drought Contingency Plan

The Regional Model DCP summary table (Table 7-9) provides an overview of all existing regional water sources, WUGs, monitoring wells, and gaging stations as well as recommended drought triggers and actions. The intent of including the monitoring wells and stations is to provide a comprehensive Region-wide assessment of what current tools are available to WUGs and districts to monitor resources within the Plateau Region.

The Regional Model DCP will undoubtedly change over time in order to address particular needs and issues of the Region's users. The version of the model in this *Plan* will primarily focus on identifying all sources, users and monitoring tools in order to find the particular components within the Region that are not currently incorporated into any existing drought plan but could potentially utilize existing data resources. Another focus of this model plan will consider consistency of existing plans within the Region. Entities that have adopted drought plans will only be assessed to this end, therefore fine-tuning existing triggers of existing municipal drought plans is not a goal of the model plan beyond an effort toward achieving consistent responses/actions to drought across the Region. Triggers have been recommended and are listed in Table 7-2 that are consistent with existing Municipal and GCD plans. An effort has been made to make the percent reduction of demand/use slightly more aggressive and more equitable. Additionally, "voluntary conservation" has been removed as a stage 1 action. Conservation is a Best Management Practice (BMP) that ideally will ultimately be practiced on a daily basis, and not merely as a reaction to drought conditions, therefore it has been removed as an action in the Regional Model DCP.

Smaller PWS entities (county-other), manufacturing, power, and irrigation water wells that exceed GCD exempt well production thresholds are subject to drought actions imposed by the conservation districts. Exempt well users are requested to voluntarily follow the actions specified by the Districts for non-exempt users. Generally, the water user groups within the Region that are not included in these plans (or included on a voluntary basis) are: (1) all exempt water wells in counties with established GCDs, and (2) all users in Val Verde County except those who are provided water by the City of Del Rio.

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**Table 7-9. Recommended Regional Drought Plan Triggers and Actions**

Source Name	Source Type (SW or GW)	Source User Entity	Current WUG Monitoring	Real-time Source Monitoring	Factors to be Considered	Recommendations	Specific Triggers								Specific Actions (Percent Reduction Demand/ Use)												
							Source Manager *a				Users *b				Source Manager *c				Users *d								
							1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4					
							Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical					
Edwards - Trinity (Plateau)	GW	City of Rocksprings	55-63-803 (Sharp well)	---	Plan in place	Add stage 4.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40					
		City of Brackettville	70-45-601 (Well #1)	---	Plan in place	Add stage 4.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	15	25	35	10	15	25	35					
		Fort Clark Springs MUD	70-45-504 (Well #1)	---	Plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	15	25	35	10	15	25	35					
		City of Del Rio	No groundwater triggers	---	Plan in place	Make stage 1 a 10% demand reduction.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40					
		Laughlin AFB									*b	*b	*b	*b													
		County Other	N/A	69-12-206 (Bandera) 56-64-302 (Kerr) 54-63-401 (Val Verde) 70-01-707 (Val Verde)	District plans in place	Make stage 1 a 10% demand reduction (REGRD only).					*b	*b	*b	*b						10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40
		Irrigation									*b	*b	*b	*b													
MAN, MIN									*b	*b	*b	*b															
Trinity	GW	City of Bandera	Groundwater triggers	TWDB 69-24-225	Plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	35	50	10	20	35	50					
		City of Kerrville	Comparison of demand and safe operation capacity	---	Plan in place	No change.	*a	*a	*a	*a					*c	*c	*c	*c									
		City of Ingram	Demand-based triggers	---	Plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage. Make stage 1 a 10% demand reduction.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40					
		County Other	N/A	56-54-405 (Kerr) 56-63-922 (Kerr) 69-19-401 (Real) 16 HGCD wells (Kerr)	District plans in place	No change.					*b	*b	*b	*b													
		Irrigation																									
MAN, MIN																											
Edwards (BFZ)	GW	County Other	N/A	70-38-902 (Kinney)	No drought plan	No change.					*b	*b	*b	*b					*d	*d	*d	*d					
		Irrigation																									
		MAN, MIN																									
Austin Chalk	GW	County Other	N/A	---	No drought plan	No change.					*b	*b	*b	*b					*d	*d	*d	*d					
		Irrigation																									
		MAN, MIN																									
Frio River Alluvium	GW	City of Leakey	N/A	---	District plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage.					*b	*b	*b	*b					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40	
		Irrigation	N/A																								
		County Other																									
Nueces River Alluvium	GW	Community of Barksdale	Unknown	---	District plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage.					*b	*b	*b	*b					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40	
		Irrigation	N/A																								
		County Other																									

\*a Source Manager Triggers – See Table 7-1 for specific triggers in Municipal and GCD drought management plans.  
 \*b User Triggers – Follow local Municipal or GCD drought management plans as shown in Table 7-1.  
 \*c Source Manager Action – See Table 7-1 for specific triggers in Municipal and GCD drought management plans.  
 \*d User Action – Follow local Municipal or GCD drought management plans as shown in Table 7-1.

**Table 7-9. (continued) Recommended Regional Drought Plan Triggers and Actions**

Source Name	Source Type (SW or GW)	Source User Entity	Current WUG Monitoring	Real-time Source Monitoring	Factors to be Considered	Recommendations	Specific Triggers								Specific Actions (Percent Reduction Demand/ Use)													
							Source Manager *a				Users *b				Source Manager				Users									
							Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical	Mild	Mod	Severe	Critical						
<b>Rio Grande Basin</b>																												
Las Moras Springs	SW	City of Brackettville	N/A	USGS station 08456300 and 08456310	Plan in place	Add stage 4.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	15	25	35	10	15	25	35						
San Felipe Springs		City of Del Rio	stages triggered by spring discharge and storage reservoirs	IBWC station 08-4530.00	Plan in place	Increase stage 1 to a 10% demand reduction.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40						
San Felipe Creek		County Other	N/A		IBWC station 08-4530.00	No drought plan						*b	*b	*b	*b						*d	*d	*d	*d				
Rio Grande					IBWC station 08-3772.00																							
Pecos River					Irrigation			USGS station 08447410																				
Devils River					MAN, MIN			USGS station 08449100																				
Amistad Reservoir								IBWC station 08-4508.00																				
Cienegas Creek					---																							
<b>Nueces River Basin</b>																												
Old Faithful Springs	SW	City of Camp Wood	RECRD weir box; based on system capacity limits	RECRD weir box	Plan in place	Remove voluntary conservation as a stage. Make stage 1 a 10% mandated demand reduction.	*a	*a	*a	*a					10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40						
West Nueces River		County Other	RECRD monitors two gages RECRD monitors six gages		No drought plan						*b	*b	*b	*b							*d	*d	*d	*d				
Nueces River Basin							USGS station 0818999010																					
Frio River							Irrigation	USGS station 08194840																				
Sabinal River							MAN, MIN	USGS station 08197936																				
Hondo Creek								N/A																				
<b>Colorado River Basin</b>																												
Llano River	SW	County Other	RECRD monitors two gages	Telegraph crossing, Hwy 377 at Evergreen School crossing	District plans in place (HGCD and REGD)	Make stage 1 a 10% demand reduction (REGD only).					*b	*b	*b	*b	10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40						
		Irrigation																										
		MAN, MIN																										
<b>San Antonio River Basin</b>																												
Medina River	SW	County Other	N/A	USGS stations 0817887350, 08178880, and 08178980						*b	*b	*b	*b							*d	*d	*d	*d					
Medina Lake		Irrigation, MAN, Min	N/A	USGS station 08179500																								
<b>Guadalupe River Basin</b>																												
Guadalupe River	SW	City of Kerrville	Comparison of demand and safe operation capacity	---	Plan in place	No change.	*a	*a	*a	*a					*c	*c	*c	*c										
		County Other	N/A		USGS stations 08165300, 08165500, 08166000, 08166140, 08166200, and 08166250	District plan in place	No change.					*b	*b	*b	*b	10	20	30	40	10	20	30	40					
		Irrigation, MAN, Min	N/A									*b	*b	*b	*b						*d	*d	*d	*d				

#### **7.6.4 Model Drought Contingency Plans**

In 2019, the Drought Preparedness Council recommended that a model DCP be in place for any water user group that exceeds ten percent of the Region's water demands. For the Plateau Region, these user groups include irrigation and municipal. Based on this recommendation, model DCPs for municipal and irrigation, along with wholesale, are available under the heading of MODEL DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLANS on the [Plateau Region Water Plan](#) website.

##### **Public Water Supplier**

Drought contingency plans have previously been adopted by the majority of the public suppliers and municipalities in the Plateau Region, although some suppliers did not provide any adopted plans. Current triggers and response actions for participating entities are summarized in Table 7-2.

##### **Irrigation**

Irrigation wells located within a municipality are subject to the triggers and response actions designated by the city's drought plan. Non-exempt irrigation wells located outside of a municipality but within a GCD are subject to the triggers and response actions of the GCD. Exempt irrigation wells located within a GCD are requested to comply voluntarily with response actions that have been mandated for non-exempt well owners. No response actions have been designated for irrigators located in Val Verde County except for those located within the City of Del Rio's jurisdictional boundary.

##### **Wholesale Water Provider**

The only wholesale water provider in the Plateau Region is the City of Del Rio. Generally, triggers are invoked when water levels in the Bedell Street Storage Reservoirs are less than a designated depth and San Felipe Spring flow drops below a specific flow rate. Currently adopted triggers and actions are summarized below in Table 7-10.



**Table 7-10. City of Del Rio Drought Triggers and Response Actions**

Stage & Description	1 – Mild	2 – Moderate	3 – Severe	4 – Extreme	5 – Emergency
Trigger	Water levels in the Bedell Street Storage Reservoir do not recover to 100% full during a 24-hour period; or are less than 30 ft. at any time;	Maximum water levels decrease over three consecutive days; or water levels are less than 25 ft. at any time;	Maximum water levels decrease over five consecutive days; or water levels are less than 20 ft. at any time;	Maximum water levels decrease over seven consecutive days; or water levels are less than 15 ft. at any time;	Water levels are less than 10 feet;
	San Felipe Spring flow is less than 25 mgd.	San Felipe Spring flow is less than 20 mgd.	San Felipe Spring flow is less than 15 mgd.	San Felipe Spring flow is less than 10 mgd.	San Felipe Spring flow is less than 5 mgd.
Conservation Goal (percent reduction in pumpage)	Reduce demand to 95% of the 30-day average prior to initiation	Reduce demand to 93% of the 30-day average prior to initiation	Reduce demand to 90% of the 30-day average prior to initiation	Restrictions to ensure adequate water supply for public health and safety, as demonstrated by meeting minimum system pressure requirements and fire flow demands.	Notify state

## **7.7 DROUGHT WATER MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES**

The PWPG has designated **drought management strategies (J-12 and J-14)** for the Bandera County Other category to be administered by the Bandera County River Authority and Groundwater District. Drought management stages by the District are triggered by the U.S. Drought Monitor and adjusted at the discretion of the District when aquifer levels, rainfall and river flow conditions warrant. Drought management is considered a temporary measure aimed at conserving available water supplies during times of drought or emergencies. Drought management is most adequately addressed in the Region through the implementation of local drought contingency plans. The PWPG is supportive of the development and use of these plans during periods of drought or emergency water needs.

## **7.8 OTHER DROUGHT-RELATED CONSIDERATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **7.7.1 Texas Drought Preparedness Council and Drought Preparedness Plan**

In accordance with TWDB rules, all relevant recommendations from the Drought Preparedness Council (DPC) were considered in the writing of this Chapter. The Texas Drought Preparedness Council is composed of representatives from multiple State agencies and plays an important role in monitoring drought conditions, advising the governor and other groups on significant drought conditions, and facilitating coordination among local, State, and Federal agencies in drought-response planning. The Council meets regularly to discuss drought indicators and conditions across the State and releases Situation Reports summarizing their findings. Additionally, the Council has developed the State Drought Preparedness Plan, which sets forth a framework for approaching drought in an integrated manner to minimize impacts to people and resources. The Plateau Region supports the ongoing efforts of the Texas Drought Preparedness Council and recommends that water providers and other interested parties regularly review the Situation Reports as part of their drought monitoring procedures. The Council provided three new recommendations in 2024 to all RWPGs which are addressed in this chapter.

- The regional water plans and state water plan shall serve as water supply plans under drought of record conditions. The DPC encourages regional water planning groups to consider planning for drought conditions worse than the drought of record, including scenarios that reflect greater rainfall deficits and/or higher surface temperatures.
- The DPC encourages regional water planning groups to incorporate projected future reservoir evaporation rates in their assessments of future surface water availability.
- The DPC encourages regional water planning groups to identify in their plans utilities within their boundaries that reported having less than 180 days of available water supply to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality during the current or preceding planning cycle. For systems that appeared on the 180-day list, RWPGs should perform the evaluation required by Texas Administrative Code Section 357.42(g), if it has not already been completed for that system.

To meet these recommendations, the PWPG has developed this Chapter to correspond with the sections of the outline template and has provided model DCPs for both municipal and irrigation users.

### **7.7.2 Other Drought Recommendations**

The PWPG recognizes that while drought preparedness, including DCPs, are an important tool, in some instance's drought cannot be prepared for, it must be responded to. The PWPG maintains that DCPs developed by the local, individual water providers are the best available tool for drought management. The PWPG fully supports the use and implementation of individual DCPs during times of drought. The PWPG has reviewed provided DCPs and specific drought response strategies proposed in this *Plan* and find no unnecessary or counterproductive variations to exist.

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