



June 20, 2008

Lost Pines Groundwater Conservation District  
Board of Directors  
P.O. Box 1027  
Smithville, TX 78957

Re: Desired Future Conditions of the Aquifers – Importance to Surface Waters

Dear Board of Directors:

This letter is to call your attention to the presentation made by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to the GMA-12 at their last meeting on May 10, 2007. Dan Opdyke of the Water Resources Branch gave a presentation titled “A Groundwater Perspective on Surface Water Resources for GMA-12” in which he discussed the importance of springs and baseflows to rivers and streams in protecting the fish and wildlife resources of our region. Based on their modeling of the central Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers (which includes GMA-12), TPWD estimates that 331 cfs (240,000 ac-ft/yr) of water is contributed by these aquifers to surface waters in the region. Under a future scenario contemplated by GMA-12 in May 2007, the aquifer contribution to surface waters in the year 2060 was predicted be only 203 cfs, for a net loss of 128 cfs (93,000 ac-ft/yr). Given the importance of these aquifers to the ecological health of the surface waters in the GMA counties, TPWD recommended that stream flows be included in the metric used to define the desired future conditions of these aquifers. Their specific recommendations were:

1. Consider the impacts on surface waters during DFC deliberations
2. Include quantitative impacts to surface waters in DFC definitions
3. Improve the GAMs in their representation of surface water/groundwater interactions

The importance of baseflow to the Colorado River as it intersects with these aquifers in Bastrop County is noted in Chapter 1 of the Region K 2006 Water Plan. In Section 1.2.4.2 Threats Due to Water Quantity Issues, the plan notes that “The relationships that currently exist between surface and groundwater may also change. Simulations indicate that the Colorado River, which currently gains water from the Carrizo-Wilcox aquifer, may begin to lose water to the aquifer by the year 2050”. In recognition of this threat the LCRWPG passed a resolution regarding the “mining of groundwater” on February 9, 2000, which strongly opposes the over-utilization of groundwater, including the mining of groundwater, within its region at rates that could lead to eventual harm to the groundwater resources, except during limited periods of extreme drought. They define groundwater mining as “the withdrawal of groundwater from an aquifer at an annualized rate, which exceeds the average annualized recharge rate to an aquifer where the recharge rate can be scientifically derived with reasonable accuracy” (page1-44, emphasis added). The attached diagram prepared by Environmental Stewardship depicts these relationships.

Given these concerns we strongly urge the LPGCD Board of Directors to heed the recommendations of Texas Parks and Wildlife and the threats recognized by Region K in establishing the desired future conditions for these aquifers in Bastrop and Lee Counties and the GMA-12 region.

Sincerely,  
Environmental Stewardship

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Executive Director

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