TRINITY GLEN ROSE GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT

RESOURCE

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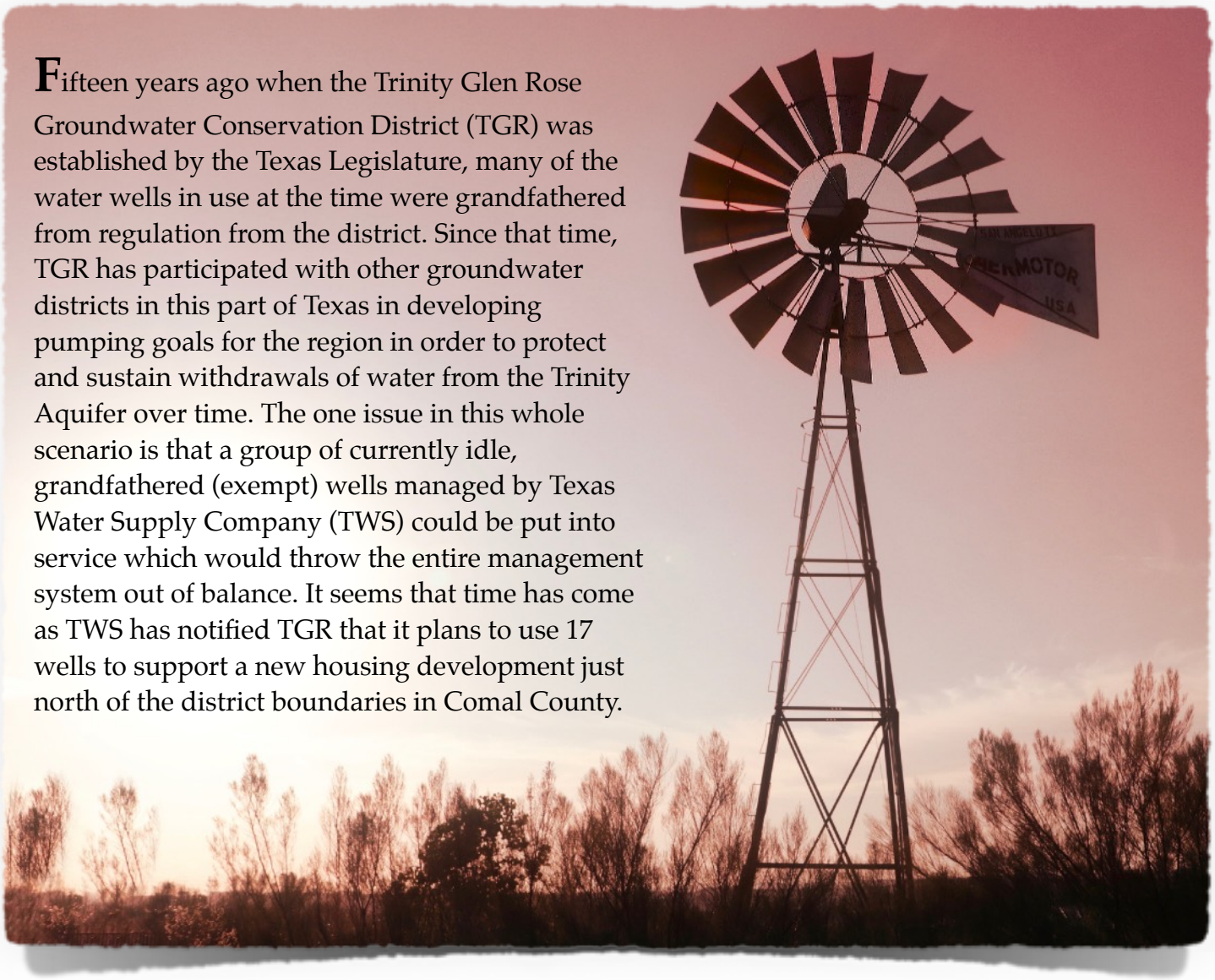
E-NEWSLETTER

Protect - Conserve - Preserve

New Potential Pumping from Trinity Aquifer Draws Concern



Fifteen years ago when the Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District (TGR) was established by the Texas Legislature, many of the water wells in use at the time were grandfathered from regulation from the district. Since that time, TGR has participated with other groundwater districts in this part of Texas in developing pumping goals for the region in order to protect and sustain withdrawals of water from the Trinity Aquifer over time. The one issue in this whole scenario is that a group of currently idle, grandfathered (exempt) wells managed by Texas Water Supply Company (TWS) could be put into service which would throw the entire management system out of balance. It seems that time has come as TWS has notified TGR that it plans to use 17 wells to support a new housing development just north of the district boundaries in Comal County.

"We have always been wary about that these Trinity Aquifer well fields being activated," said George Wissmann, TGR general manager. "Right now our modeled available groundwater for the whole district is 25,511 acre feet per year. By staying within that withdrawal goal, we are projected to draw down the Trinity Aquifer by an average of 30 feet over the next 50 years, which complies with the regional water plan. However, the Texas Water Supply Company wells could add an additional 17,000 acre feet of pumping to our current totals, and that would take us way beyond our annual pumping targets. That could be a problem."

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Trinity Aquifer Pumping - continued

The Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District is located in Bexar County, north of Loop 1604, running from Bandera Road on the west to near I-35 on the east. Water withdrawn from the Trinity Aquifer in this area serves thousands of customers and hundreds of businesses.

"The Trinity Aquifer is not anything like the Edwards Aquifer, which most people are familiar with," said TGR Board President Joe du Menil. "And since we can't say for sure exactly how this new pumping will affect our district overall, the board has directed staff to work with our regional partners and other groundwater agencies to do more computer modeling of this area. We've also retained an attorney who specializes in law governing groundwater districts."

Computer models are used to predict how much pumping can be sustained by aquifers over time. Since the Trinity Aquifer is more segmented than the Edwards, it is possible for pumping in one area of the aquifer to not greatly impact withdrawals in other areas. TWS says its studies show that large water withdrawals can be sustained to serve the housing developments. Other water experts aren't so sure that the water will be there in a drought.

"We've already made contact with geoscientists, San Antonio Water System which owns Trinity Aquifer wells in the same area and our State legislators to begin learning more about the scientific and legal aspects of this new development," Wissmann noted. "We have a lot of work to do on this issue. But, our plan is to keep everyone informed about what we learn and how that will shape the District's future actions."

The Trinity Glen Rose Groundwater Conservation District (TGR) and San Antonio Water System (SAWS) are teaming up to make irrigation system consultations available for free! For a **limited number of residents living in areas served by the TGR,** SAWS or TGR irrigation system experts will conduct the consultation and TGR will provide a bonus $50 coupon which can be redeemed for landscape materials and low-water-use plant materials. Go to TrinityGlenRose.com to sign up today.

Did you know…

You can build your own compost pile? Texas A&M's Agrilife website contains great information about creating a composting setup at your home.

You can click this link to get all of the instructions for home-based composting.