Annual Report

Fiscal Year 2025

McKinzi Donnell - Staff Geologist

Lynn Smith, P.G. - General Manager

11/26/2025

GROUNDWATER
Rolling Plains
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

This report describes the status of various goals that are stated in the District's Management Plan. It also serves to provide information to the Board of Directors and interested members of the public regarding activities performed by the District during the 2025 fiscal year.

Executive Summary

In the 2025 fiscal year, the Rolling Plains Groundwater Conservation District has continued to perform its duties as a conservation entity by permitting and mitigating wells and investing time and resources into recharge projects. Lynn Smith continues in his full-time role as General Manager. The District has also hired two new full-time employees: Lily Gann works as the District's Conservation Technician and McKinzi Donnell works as the District's Staff Geologist. All staff work together to continue our mission within the community and with other cooperating groups like Texas Alliance Groundwater Districts (TAGD), Texas Water Association (TWA), and others.

The District continued development on its managed aquifer recharge program. This program is partially funded by a grant from the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB), and we have been reporting our progress every three months with no issues. We have made good progress on the project and hope to have definitive results on whether or the Myers Site in particular is sustainable for recharge by December of 2025. While the Myers Site is the priority right now, we have continued testing on our other potential recharge sites, as well.

The District cooperates with multiple organizations to continue its weather modification project. We attended the annual Rolling Plains Water Improvement Program (RPWIP) meeting and continued funding flights in all three counties.

The District continues to measure water levels across the District and perform water quality analyses within 48 hours of receiving samples. Additionally, we have delivered multiple water samples for more rigorous testing in certain cases as needed.

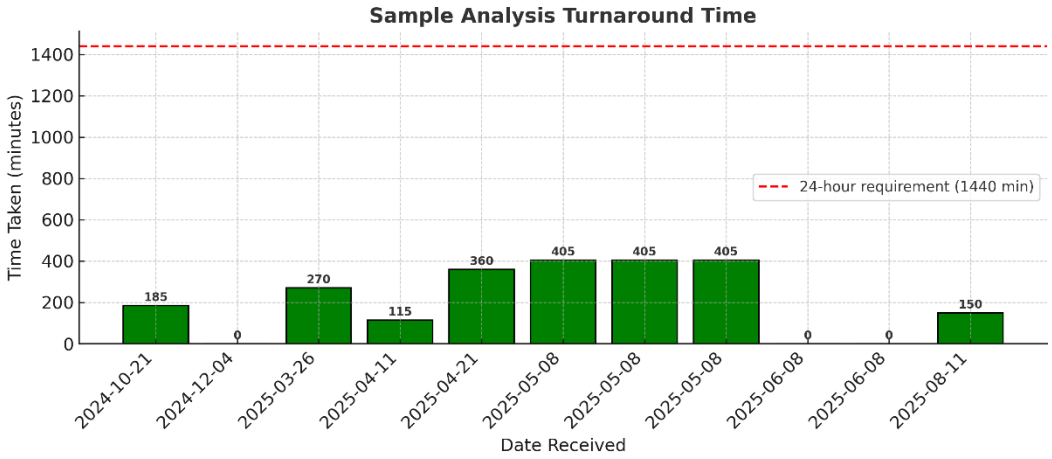
The District also participated in many events around the District to inform the public on groundwater conservation issues. These include seminars and hands-on activities hosted by the District as well as by other groups such as AgriLife Extension. The District's staff also gained new insights by attending several educational conferences and training activities throughout the year.

The remainder of this report provides details on activities of the District during this fiscal year. They are categorized into goals that appear in the District's Groundwater Management Plan. Comparisons with previous year's data are made where appropriate.

Management Goal 1: Addressing Conservation

Objective 1.1: Conduct water quality analyses of requested wells

The performance standard for this objective is to conduct the requested analyses within forty-eight hours of receipt of the water sample. Eleven water quality analyses were performed this fiscal year; each was analyzed within forty-eight hours of receipt of the sample. Results were provided to the owner or well contractor as appropriate.



Objective 1.2: Publicize groundwater conservation issues through local newspapers, group presentations, schools, and other media opportunities

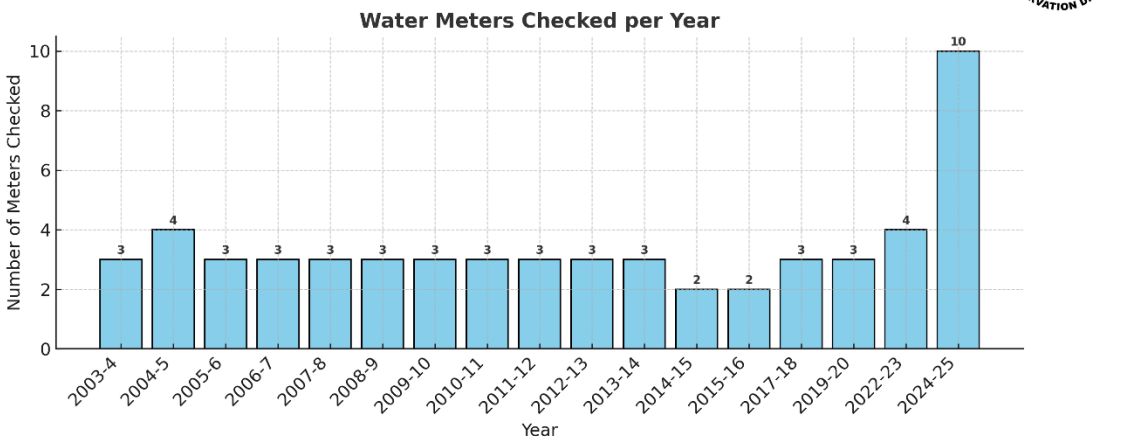
The performance standard for this objective is to publicize groundwater conservation issues using the above outlets on at least one occasion by September 30th of each year. Where applicable, the TWDB conservation webpage and best management practices should be used. In this fiscal year, the District publicized conservation issues by hosting Water Day. Water Day was hosted on May 19, 2025, at the Salt Fork Recreation Complex. There were 110 people in attendance and multiple stations that informed on water conservation issues and techniques.

1.2a The performance standard for this sub-objective is to educate the public on wasteful irrigation practices with at least one news article, group presentation, or other local publicity opportunity by September 30th. Staff Geologist McKinzi Donnell gave a group presentation at a local 4H meeting on May 19, 2025, highlighting the need for and practice of responsible irrigation practices.

Management Goal 2: Providing the Most Efficient Use of Groundwater

Objective 2.1: Monitor flowmeters on wells to facilitate water usage efficiency studies

The performance standard for this objective is to read and record pumping data from at least 75% of flowmeter locations by September 30th each year. District staff checked meters on December 27, 2025; April 8, 2025; and April 28, 2025, for a total of 10 meters. This represents 100% of known meters.



Objective 2.2: Publicize the need for efficient use of groundwater through local newspapers, group presentations, schools, and other media opportunities

The performance standard for this objective is to publicize groundwater efficiency issues using the above outlets on at least one occasion by September 30th each year. During this fiscal year, the District publicized efficiency issues at the 4H Baylor County Farm and Ranch Tour that was held on May 13, 2025. Additionally, we maintained our website with conservation and water use efficiency information.

Management Goal 3: Controlling and Preventing Waste of Groundwater

Objective 3.2: Maintain a program to identify, locate, and obtain closure of abandoned wells

3.2a The performance standard for this sub-objective is to inspect and complete a report on each open or abandoned well within thirty days of receipt of the report of such well. District staff did not receive any reports of abandoned wells this fiscal year.

3.2b The performance standard for this sub-objective is to notify owners of any open or uncovered well described in 3.2a and seek compliance with Rules and Statute. District staff did not receive any reports of abandoned wells this fiscal year.

3.2c The performance standard for this sub-objective is to notify owners of the District's fund availability (if any) to aid with plugging open or uncovered wells by September 30th. District staff did not receive any reports of abandoned wells this fiscal year, but we did discuss cost share with several well owners.

Management Goal 4: Addressing drought conditions

Objective 4.1: Maintain the District's Drought Contingency Plan

4.1a The performance standards for this sub-objective are to review and update the Drought Contingency Plan by September 30th each year. The Drought Contingency Plan was reviewed at the July Board meeting. The Board acted to update the District's Drought Contingency Policy. The District continues to monitor rainfall utilizing a network of six weather stations maintained by the District.

4.1b The performance standard for this sub-objective is to incorporate newly annexed areas into the District's Drought Contingency Plan by September 30th. The District has not annexed any additional parcels this fiscal year.

Management Goal 5: Address Recharge Enhancement

Objective 5.1: Stormwater Capture Managed Aquifer Recharge Report

The performance standard for this objective is to review the District's Stormwater Capture Managed Aquifer Recharge Report 2023, or subsequent revisions, at least once annually by September 30th. The District's Stormwater Capture Managed Aquifer Recharge Report continues to be revised with additional information and options for recharge enhancement. The District met with multiple consultants including WFX on December 5, 2024; GSA on April 1,2025; and TxDOT on June 4, 2025. During these meetings we added additional reports that pertained to the status and the future of our MAR project.

Objective 5.2: Feasibility Study

The performance standard for this objective is to conduct one feasibility study annually of a specific site for installation of a Stormwater Managed Aquifer Recharge Project within the District by September 30th, if the opportunity and funding become available. Two feasibility studies were conducted this year: one for the Bufkin Site in Baylor County and one for the Myers Site in Haskell County. Site-specific activities are listed below.

Recharge Site Activities:

Bufkin:

The Bufkin Site consists of 33 acres located in Baylor County just south of Seymour. The District has a lease with option to purchase agreement with the landowner for all 33 acres, purchase dependent on testing. In order to comply with TWDB for funding purposes, the District conducted an engineering feasibility study in March of the prior fiscal year. In April, Geosystems Analysis Inc. (GSA) performed a watershed delineation to help determine stormwater frequency and volume before we began testing on the site itself. In June, the District performed water quality testing on the groundwater and surface water near the site. The results indicated that the water quality was suitable for safe recharge.

Following the water quality results, the District moved forward with a geophysical study using Electromagnetic Induction (EM). Along with data from borehole geophysics data collected previously, the study showed mediocre results for a suitable recharge project. Work will continue on this site to determine if it meets our standards for a sustainable and cost effective recharge facility.

Myers:

The Myers Site consists of 93 acres located in Haskell County between Rochester and Rule. The District has a contract with the landowner for all 93 acres with the deadline for purchase being December 31, 2025. In order to comply with TWDB for funding purposes, the District conducted an engineering feasibility study in March. District staff then cleared a limited amount of undergrowth on the site in preparation for geophysical studies and other testing. In April, Geosystems Analysis Inc.(GSA) performed a watershed delineation to help determine stormwater frequency and volume before we began testing on the site itself.

Later in April, after getting results from the watershed delineation, we conducted geophysical testing including Electrical Resistivity Tomography (ERT), Electromagnetic Induction (EM), and Towed Transient Electromagnetic (tTEM). The geophysical report showed promising results for a feasible recharge site and supported evidence from borehole logging done throughout the year.

Following the geophysical study, we performed water quality testing on the groundwater and surface water near the site. The results indicated that the water quality was suitable for safe recharge. Test pits

were excavated and limited infiltrometer testing was performed in August by GSA and District staff. Eleven test pits were excavated at various locations across the 93 acres. Results showed that there is sand at around 7-8 feet in depth at two test pits which gives promising results for constructing a successful infiltration basin in a cost-effective manner. However, with only two of the eleven pits showing the target sand, more excavation data was needed to define its extents. The infiltrometer testing gave us the results we expected for the impermeable clays at the top. We were unable to do infiltrometer testing at depth due to scheduling constraints with equipment rental.

After getting successful results with the test pits, Dunaway & Associates performed a wetlands assessment the following week in August to confirm any proposed facility construction was within state and federal environmental regulations. Work will continue at this site to determine if it meets our standards for a sustainable recharge project.

North Gilliland:

The North Gilliland Site is located in Knox County north of Gilland. We do not have a landowner contract for this site yet, so testing has been limited. We hope to gain access to the site to continue testing to determine whether it meets our standards for a sustainable recharge project.

Rochester:

The Rochester site in located in Haskell County a few miles northwest of Rochester. We are proactively working with the landowner on acquiring a contract for this site; we currently do not have one, so testing has been limited. We hope to gain access to the site to continue testing to determine whether it meets our standards for a sustainable recharge project.

Weinert:

The Weinert site is located in Haskell County between Rochester and Weinert. We do not have a landowner contract for this site yet, so testing has been limited. We hope to gain access to the site to continue testing to determine whether it meets our standards for a sustainable recharge project.

Actions	Myers	Bufkin	Rochester	North Gilland	Weinert
Borehole Geophysics	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓*
Test Pits	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Wetlands Asessment	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Watershed Deliniation	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Landowner Contract	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Water Quality	✓	✓	✗	✗	✗
Infiltormeter Testing	✓	✗	✗	✗	✗
Surface Geophysics	✓	✓	✗	✗	✓*
Engineering Feasibility Study	✓	✓*	✗	✗	✗
Mid-Level Enviornmental Review	✓*	✓*	✗	✗	✗

* Indicates action completed outside of this fiscal year

Management Goal 6: Addressing Rainwater Harvesting

Objective 6.1: Rainwater Harvesting

6.1a The performance standard for this sub-objective is to educate the public on rainwater harvesting using small scale rooftop catchment systems or large-scale Stormwater Capture Managed Aquifer Recharge facilities with at least one news article, group presentation, or other local publicity opportunity by September 30th. The District hosted Water Day on May 19, 2025, which highlighted rainwater harvesting projects within the District.

6.2b The performance standard for this sub-objective is to provide a summary of rainwater harvesting projects within the District. A rainwater harvesting project was developed at Seymour Elementary School in 2023 (pictured below). The District visited and observed the different programs that have been

developed alongside the rainwater catchment system including a school garden watered by the reservoir.

The District is aware of many other rainwater catchment systems in the community, including both small- and large-scale systems, which staff have visited and inventoried.

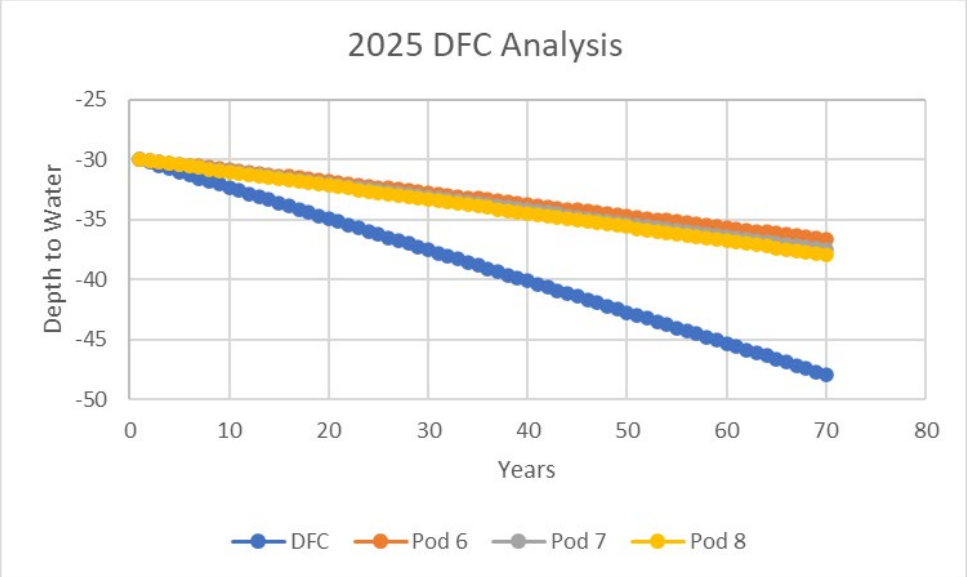
Management Goal 7: Addressing the Desired Future Conditions Adopted by the District

Objective 7.1: Monitor static water levels in selected wells

The performance standard for this objective is to measure the static water level in at least fifty wells within the District by September 30th. The District measured water levels in 65 wells within the District. Staff began measuring these wells in January 2025 and finished in mid-March of the same year.

Objective 7.2: Complete hydrographs in monitored wells

The performance standard for this objective is to complete the hydrographs for the monitored wells by September 30th and provide them to the Board at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Hydrographs were completed by September 30th and provided to the Board at their May meeting. These hydrographs were analyzed and used to create this DFC Analysis.



	DTW	Annual Static	5 Year Diff	10 Year Diff	5 Year Trend	Total Trend	Total Years
Pod 6	-24.91	0.62				-0.10	31.88
Pod 7	-28.72	0.34	-1.41	3.73	-0.07	-0.11	59.92
Pod 8	-24.77					-0.12	58.00
DFC						-0.26	70.00

Management Goal 8: Joint and Regional Planning

The District is actively involved in joint planning activities at the Area, Regional, and State level. The District has a voting membership in the Groundwater Management Area Six (GMA 6), Region G Water Planning Group, and Region B Water Planning Group. These groups make decisions that affect the District both from a goal/rule setting standpoint and a monetary standpoint. All groups are on track with their planning and have held all required meetings. All full-time staff attend at least two state-wide meetings of interest to groundwater conservation districts each year. The District is a voting member of the Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts Legislative Committee. As the Legislature continues to set more mandates for these groups (and the District), participation in them will only grow in importance.

Objective 8.1: Attend and Participate in Regional Water Planning

The performance standard for this objective is for District staff to attend, either in person or through recording, 75% of the Region B and Region G Water Planning Group meeting annually by September 30th. At least one person on staff was able to attend and participate in 100% of the Region B and Region G Water Planning Group Meetings.

Regional Water Planning Meetings Attended
Region B Meetings

Date	Meeting	Attended
2024-12-04	Region B	Lynn Smith
2025-02-05	Region B	Lynn Smith, McKinzi Donnell
2025-04-30	Region B	Lynn Smith
2025-10-01	Region B	Lynn Smith, Lily Gann

Region G Meetings

Date	Meeting	Attended
2024-11-07	Region G	Lynn Smith
2025-02-13	Region G	Lynn Smith, McKinzi Donnell
2025-05-06	Region G	McKinzi Donnell
2025-10-07	Region G	Lynn Smith, McKinzi Donnell

Objective 8.2: Attend and Participate in GMA 6 Joint Planning

The performance standard for this objective is for District staff to attend either in person or through recording, 75% of the GMA 6 Joint Planning meetings annually by September 30th. At least one person on staff was able to attend and participate in 100% of the GMA 6 Joint Planning Meetings. Additionally, General Manager Lynn Smith is the GMA 6 coordinator.

Management Goal 9: Cooperation and Management for Mesonet Sites

Each year the District will cooperate with the Natural Resource Conservation Service, the West Texas Mesonet, and TWDB in providing local weather data from one or more weather stations within the District on a daily basis for residents of the District. The District, in cooperation with these groups, funds six Mesonet stations. They are near Truscott, Seymour, Hefner, Knox City, Weinert, and Haskell.

Objective 9.1: Mesonet Site Checks

The performance standard for this objective is to check the physical condition of the Mesonet sites within the District annually by September 30th. District staff checked each site and photographed them on September 16, 2025.

Management Goal 10: Brush Control

Objective 10.1: Educate the Public on Brush Control

The performance standard for this objective is to educate the public on the benefits of brush control with at least one news article, group presentation, or other local publicity opportunities by September 30th. District staff met with Knox County producers and publicly presented the benefits of brush control in August of this fiscal year.

Objective 10.1: Conduct Brush Control

The performance standard for this objective is, if opportunity and funding are available, the District will participate in or conduct one or more brush control activities by September 30th. District staff cleared brush multiple times at our potential Managed Aquifer Recharge sites throughout the fiscal year.

Management Goal 11: Precipitation Enhancement

Objective 11.1: Education the Public on Precipitation Enhancement

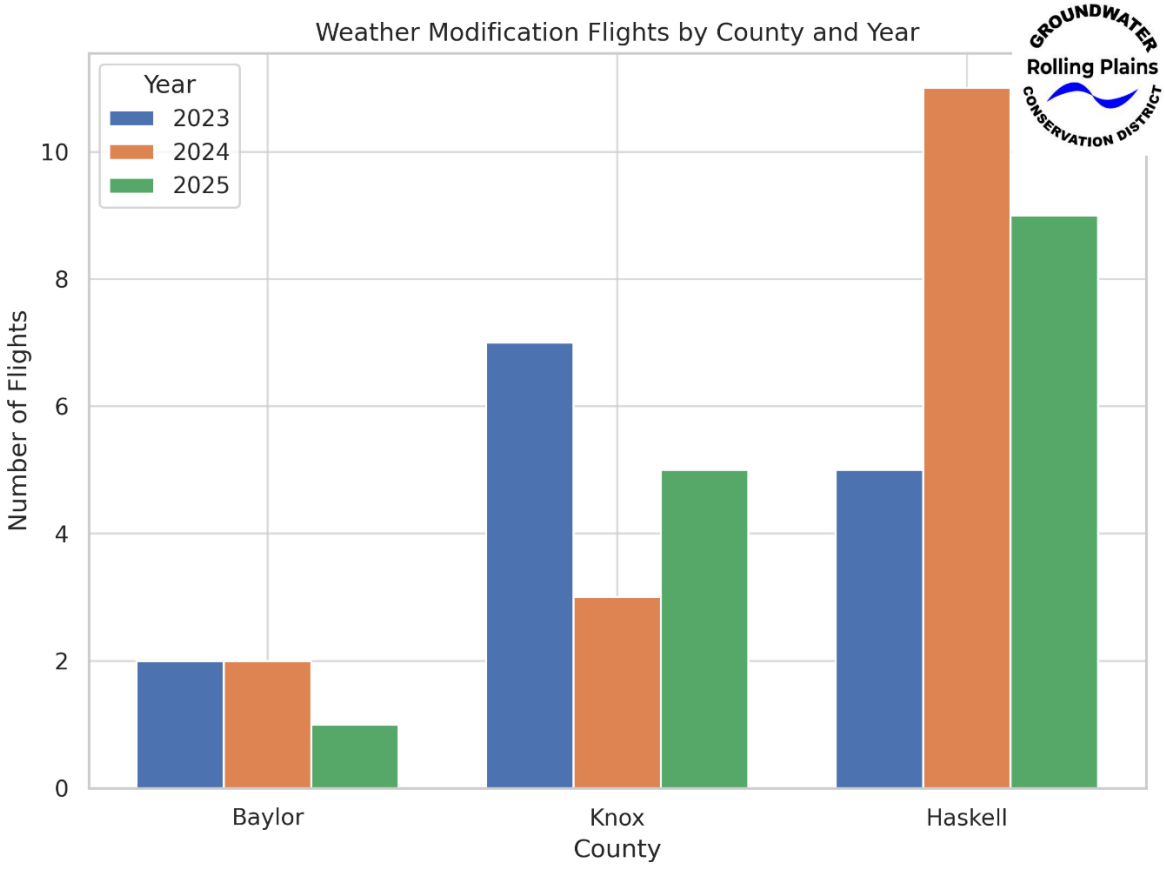
The performance standard for this objective is to educate the public on precipitation enhancement with at least one news article, group presentation, or other local publicity opportunity by September 30th. Staff Geologist McKinzi Donnell presented this topic, among others, at the Baylor County 4H Farm and Ranch Tour on May 13, 2025.

Objective 11.2: Rolling Plain Water Improvement Association Attendance

The performance standard for this objective is for the District to attend, in person or through recording, the annual meeting (if any occurs) of the Rolling Plains Water Improvement Association Precipitation Enhancement Program by September 30th. General Manager Lynn Smith and Staff Geologist McKinzi Donnell attended the annual meeting on April 9, 2025.

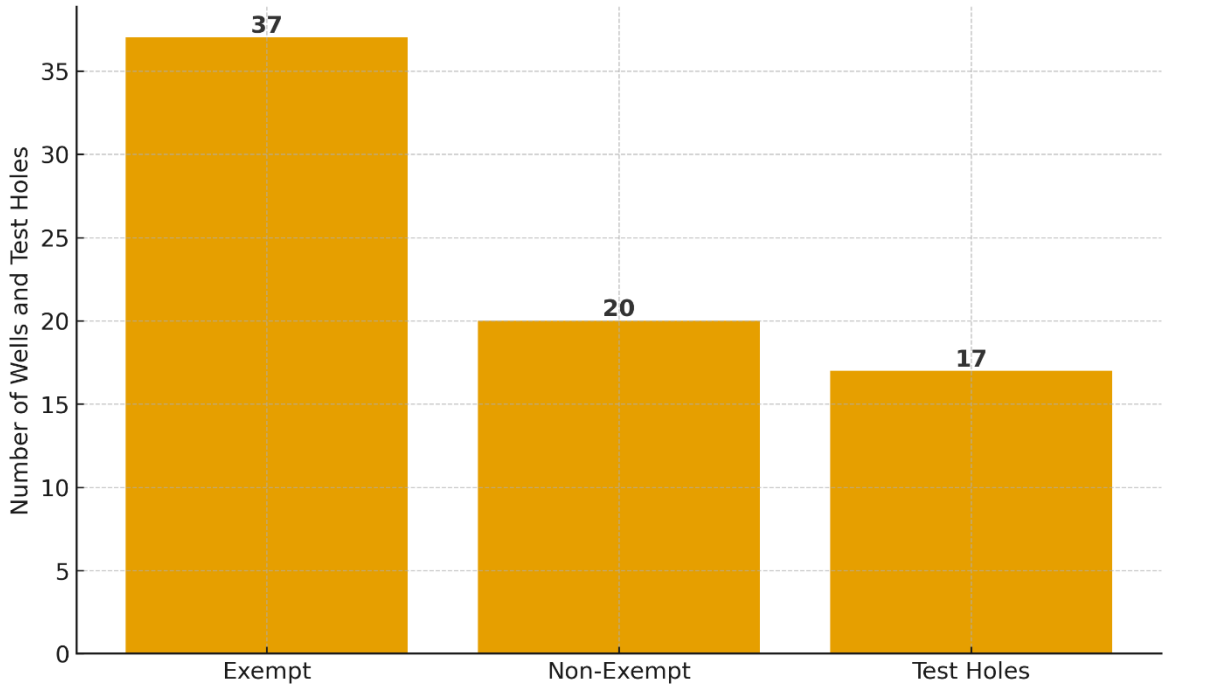
Objective 11.3: Funding for Precipitation Enhancement

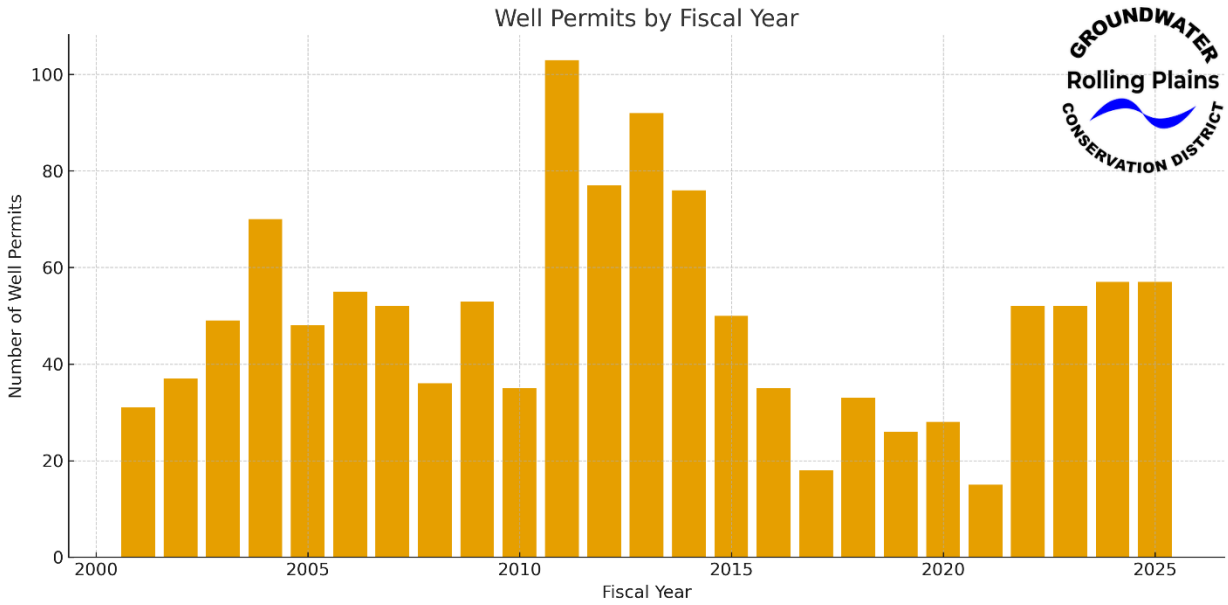
The performance standard for the objective is, if the opportunity and funding are available, the District will participate in one or more precipitation enhancement flights annually by September 30th. The following graphic illustrates the District's participation in precipitation enhancement flights over the past three years.



Drilling Activities

The graph below shows the number of applications for test hole drilling and the number of applications for drilling a well. Not all applicants actually drilled after making application with the District, and each test hole application may result in several test holes being drilled rather than a one-to-one relationship as occurs on well applications. The second graph demonstrates a comparison of the number of well permits over the past 24 years. Prior to 2023, the District did not consistently track exempt well drilling.





Extra-District Activities

District staff participated in several organizations this year such as TAGD and the Texas Groundwater Association. Lynn currently serves on the TAGD Groundwater Protection Committee, Legislative Committee, and Summit Planning Committee. He is also an elected Board Member in the Texas Groundwater Association. McKinzi has been asked to serve on the TAGD Summit Planning Committee and Education Committee and will start in FY2026. While these organizations do not directly manage groundwater, they do provide opportunities for inter-district cooperation and education on many levels. They also provide a good opportunity for staff to network with other agencies, water well contractors, and the general public.

Certifications and Seals

Mr. Lynn Smith, Texas Professional Geoscientist #11223, provided data analysis and prepared or supervised the preparation of the graphs and/or maps that occur within this report. He, in his capacity as General Manager and a Professional Geoscientist, is responsible for the opinions and conclusions herein. The front cover of this document bears his seal and signature.