

CHAPTER 10
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION
AND PLAN ADOPTION

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10 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND PLAN ADOPTION

The Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) members recognized from the beginning the importance of involving the public in the planning process. Chapter 10 contains an overview of the Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) representation, the Group's commitment to public involvement, rural outreach, administrative planning process, specific activities that insured that the public was informed and involved in the planning process, and the implementation of the *Plan*. Chapter 10 appendices contain comments and responses on the Initially Prepared Plan by the Public (Appendix 10A), TWDB (Appendix 10B), and TPWD (Appendix 10C).

10.1 PLATEAU WATER PLANNING GROUP

The TWDB appointed an initial coordinating body or PWPG for the original Region J based on names submitted by the public for consideration. The PWPG then voted to change its name to Plateau and expanded its membership based on their knowledge of additional persons who could appropriately represent water user groups (WUGs) (Table 10-1). Non-voting members representing interested State agencies and adjacent planning regions are listed in Table 10-2. State planning provisions mandate that one or more representatives of the following WUGs be seated on each planning group: agriculture, counties, electric generating utilities, environment, industries, municipalities, river authorities, public, small business, water districts, and water utilities. An electric generating utility does not exist within the Plateau Region and is therefore not represented. In addition to the other 10 categories, the PWPG chose to appoint a member to represent the tourism industry because of its prevalence in the Region. Also, to insure adequate geographic representation, the PWPG made sure that at least one member was selected from each of the six counties. Membership was also extended to represent the three Groundwater Management Areas within the Region. Staff persons from both the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and the Texas Department of Agriculture were also appointed as non- voting members.

**Table 10-1. Plateau Water Planning Group Voting Members
(Effective August 8, 2024)**

Water Use Category	Committee Member	County	Entity
Agricultural	Wes Robinson	Kinney	Kinney County
Counties	Vacant	Edwards	Edwards County
Environmental	Tully Shahan	Kinney	Attorney At Law
Industries	Jess Erlund	Kerr	Aqua Texas
Municipalities	Carlos Velarde	Val Verde	Val Verde County
	Vacant	Kerr	City of Kerrville
Other	Jerry Simpton	Val Verde	The Bank and Trust
	Feathergail Wilson	Bandera	Strata Geological Services
Public	Dell Dickinson	Val Verde	Skyline Ranch
	Max Martin	Edwards, Kinney, Val Verde	Martin Ranch Mgmt.
	Brian Leiker	Bandera, Kerr, Real	Real-Edwards Conservation & Reclamation District
River Authorities	Tara Bushnoe	Kerr	UGRA
Small Business	Jonathan Letz (Chair)	Kerr	Kerr County
Tourism	Homer Stevens	Bandera	The Farm Country Club & RV Park
Water Districts	Roland Trees	Real	Real-Edwards Conservation & Reclamation District
	Gene Williams (Secretary)	Kerr	Headwaters Groundwater Conservation District
	David Mauk	Bandera	Bandera County River Authority & Groundwater Conservation District
	Marti Payne	Kinney	Kinney County Groundwater Conservation District
Water Utilities	Charlie Wiedenfeld	Kerr	Wiedenfeld Water Works, Inc.
GMA	Genell Hobbs (Vice Chair)		GMA 7
	David Jeffery		GMA 9
	Genell Hobbs (Vice Chair)		GMA 10

**Table 10-2. Plateau Water Planning Group Non-Voting Members
(Effective August 8, 2024)**

Committee Member	Entity
Lann Bookout	Texas Water Development Board
Carol Faulkenberry	Texas Department of Agriculture
JD Lawrence (Alternate)	
Lindsey Elkins	Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Sarah Robertson (Alternate)	
Kendria Ray	Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board
Kenn Norris	Region E Liaison
Paul Tybor	Region K Liaison
Con Mims	Region L Liaison
Tomas Rodriguez	Region M Liaison
Carl Schwing	Region J Liaison to Region M

10.1.1 Interregional Planning Council

The TWDB is required by Texas Water Code Section 16.052 to appoint an Interregional Planning Council made up of one member from each regional water planning group (RWPG). The purpose of the Council is to:

- Improve coordination among the RWPGs, and between the RWPGs and the TWDB in meeting goals of the state water planning process;
- Facilitate dialogue regarding regional water management strategies; and
- Share operational best practices of the regional water planning process.

The PWPG has appointed Jonathan Letz to this position.

10.2 ADMINISTRATIVE PROCESS AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The PWPG functions through procedures set forth in their adopted bylaws and follow planning guidelines established by Legislative rule and TWDB contractual guidelines. With planning funds administered through TWDB, the PWPG then hires technical consultants to perform the work of preparing the regional plan for planning group review and adoption. Work required completing the Plan follows well-defined guidelines intended to meet the mandated legislation and to establish a degree of format uniformity between plans submitted by all 16 planning regions. The PWPG operates its administrative function through the Upper Guadalupe River Authority (UGRA), which oversees contractual and budgetary obligations. All meetings of the PWPG are open to the public and meet Open Meetings Act requirements.

To provide a public access point, an internet website called the [Plateau Water Planning Group](#) contains timely information that includes names of planning group members, bylaws, meeting schedules, agendas, minutes, meeting backup materials, and important documents, including groundwater conservation district management plans, technical reports, draft chapters for review, planning schedules and budgets, and links to water-related sites. Summaries of most of the planning group meetings were e-mailed to the full list of interested parties, to enable persons who were unable to attend to stay up to date on the planning process. Every document that was e-mailed or mailed to Planning Group Members for their review was also e-mailed to the interested parties list, made available on the PWPG website, and provided in hard copy at all public meetings. In addition, news stories concerning water planning-related issues were regularly distributed to all interested parties.

10.3 PLANNING GROUP MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

All activities associated with the Regional Water Planning Process were performed in accordance with the State Open Meetings Act. All meetings of the PWPG, including committee meetings, are open to the public where visitors are afforded the opportunity and encouraged to voice their opinions, concerns, or suggestions. Meetings are primarily held in [Leakey-Kerrville, Texas](#) ~~so that all citizens within the Region have an equal opportunity to attend~~. Meeting notices are posted with the County Commissioners' Courts of each county.

All material to be presented at public meetings and all draft and final *Plan* documents were made available for public inspection on the Planning Group's website hosted by the UGRA in accordance with the Texas Public Information Act.

A public hearing was held virtually on April 23, 2020 to receive comments on the ~~2021~~2026 *Initially Prepared Plan*. Notice of the Public Hearings was sent to 334 down-river water rights holders as well as to each county commissioner's court and designated libraries. Hard copies of the *Initially Prepared Plan* were placed in the courthouse and a designated library in each of the Regions' six counties listed below, and an electronic copy of the draft *Plan* was made available on the [Upper Guadalupe River Authority](#) website. The public was given a full month prior to the hearing to review the document.

- Bandera County Library
- Butt-Holdsworth Memorial Library (Kerr County)
- Claud H. Gilmer Memorial Library (Edwards County)
- Kinney County Public Library
- Real County Public Library
- Val Verde County Library

Prior to receiving official comments during the public hearing, a question and answer session was held so that the public attendees would have an opportunity to gain a better understanding of how the draft *Plan* was formulated. X people representing the public attended the hearing, along with several planning group members. At the conclusion of the hearing, the public was notified that there would be a 60-day period in which the PWPG would continue to receive written comments. The TWDB and TPWD also reviewed the *Initially Prepared Plan* and provided comments. Responses to agency and public comments are provided in Appendix 10A, Appendix 10B and Appendix 10C. On October 22, 2020, the PWPG met in a public forum and approved the final ~~2021~~2026 *Plateau Region Water Plan* for submittal to the TWDB.

10.4 COORDINATION WITH OTHER REGIONS

Coordination with other regions was accomplished through liaisons shared with adjacent regions (Regions E, F, K, L and M) and through active participation in Chairs Conferences scheduled by the TWDB.

10.5 PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Following final adoption of the ~~2021~~2026 *Plateau Region Water Plan*, copies of the *Plan* were provided to each municipality and county commissioners' court in the Region. An electronic copy of the *Plan* is also available on the UGRA and TWDB websites.

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APPENDIX 10A

RESPONSE TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) hosted a virtual (in response to COVID 19) Public Hearing on the Plateau Water Initially Prepared Plan (IPP) on April 23, 2020. The Planning Group received one comment from Mr. Skip Newson, a resident of Val Verde County and an owner of property abutting the Devil's River.

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RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Plateau Water Planning Group appreciates the well-written comment / position paper presented by Mr. Skip Newsom and, in response, the PWPG has eliminated their recommendation pertaining to the creation of a Val Verde Groundwater Conservation District (Chapter 8). The Group has also added the following language to the recommendation pertaining to water research needs for the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) Aquifer:

Specific concern has been voiced by citizens in Val Verde County where the groundwater source availability of the Edwards-Trinity (Plateau) Aquifer changed from 25,000 acre-feet per year in the 2016 Plateau Region Water Plan to 50,000 acre-feet per year in this current Plan. TWDB modelers are particularly critical of the ability of any existing groundwater model to accurately assess Val Verde County groundwater availability as aquifer properties are poorly defined in most of Val Verde County because there are few data on aquifer responses to pumping stresses. In particular, a better understanding is needed of the different geohydrologic environments that exist between the southern San Felipe Springs – Amistad Reservoir area versus the upstream Pecos and Devil’s River area.

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APPENDIX 10B

RESPONSE TO TWDB COMMENTS

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RESPONSE TO TWDB COMMENTS**LEVEL 1:**

1a. The following ten strategies listed in the IPP have been changed to a starting decade of 2030 (See response 1b below).

- City of Bandera – Reuse treated wastewater effluent for irrigation ---
- City of Bandera – Promote, design and install rainwater harvesting systems ---
- City of Bandera – Additional Lower Trinity well ---
- City of Bandera – Surface water acquisition, treatment and ASR
- City of Kerrville – Increase water treatment and ASR capacity
- EKCRWSP Project 1 – Construction of an Ellenburger Aquifer water supply well
- EKCRWSP Project 2 – Construction of off-channel surface water storage
- EKCRWSP Project 3 – Construction of an ASR facility
- EKCRWSP Project 4 – Construction of a wellfield and desalination plant
- City of Brackettville – Increased supply to Spofford with new water line and increased storage facility
- Fort Clark Springs MUD – Increased storage facility
- City of Leakey – Develop interconnection between city wells
- City of Del Rio – Water treatment plant expansion
- City of Del Rio – Develop a wastewater reuse program

1b. The remaining strategies listed as starting in the 2020 decade could feasibly be implemented by January 5, 2023.

- All conservation strategies can be implemented immediately at the discretion and need of the WUG.
- All water loss audit and main-line repairs can be implemented in a very short time at the discretion of the WUG.
- Groundwater well projects can feasibly be implemented within approximately one year at the discretion of the WUG.

1c. There are no increases in unmet needs resulting from changing the starting decade of implementation of the above strategies to 2030.

1d. The Plateau Region Water Planning Group acknowledges that they will be expected to rely on its next planning cycle budget for any required Plan amendments.

2. DB22 report appendix page now contains listing of TWDB provided tables and notations on tables with no relevant data.

3. Current preparation for drought in the region is discussed in Chapter 1, Section 1.2.5, final paragraph.

4. Tables 3-1, 3-2 and 3-3 in the Plan now match Ex Sum TWDB tables.

5. Table 3.2 headers are corrected to show “Major Water Provider”.

6. Guadalupe Basin is added in Table 3-4.

7. Reuse source supply methodology is provided in Chapter 3 Section 3.4.

8. River Basin WAM summary information is provided in Chapter 3 Section 3.2.
9. Table 4.2 headers are corrected to show “Major Water Provider”.
10. Tables 4-3 and 4-4 are eliminated and reference is made to the appropriate tables in the Executive Summary Database-22 Appendix.
11. The second-tier needs analysis for WUGs and MWPs is referenced to the appropriate TWDB DB22 table in the Executive Summary Appendix in the third paragraph of Ch 4 Sec 4. Text is revised to specifically explain that Del Rio Utilities Commission, the Region’s only Major water Provider, is listed in this table.
12. An ASR discussion is added to Chapter 5 Section 5.2.5.
13. Vegetative Management strategies have been eliminated from Chapter 5 Tables 5-2, 5-3, 5-4 and Appendix 5A; and is discussed as a recommended conservation practice in Chapter 5 Section 5-2-8.
14. Discussion pertaining to Flying L Resort is eliminated from Strategy J-1.
15. PWPG considers strategies J-2, J-28 and J-75 capable of producing firm yields during drought conditions and desires to retain all three strategies. Strategy discussions are altered to eliminate confusion and the “Reliability” factor index definition at the end of Table 5-2 is changed to read “2 = Provides firm supply, but may be partially impacted during drought conditions”. Strategy J-75 was incorrectly titled and is corrected to read “Drill Additional Well in the Lower Trinity Aquifer”.
16. Land purchase and survey cost is shown in Chapter 5 Appendix 5A Strategy J-45 Project 2a.
17. This strategy has been eliminated.
18. Strategy J-83 discussion is revised to describe the infrastructure component of the project as a 10-mile long major transmission pipeline. Reference to the TWDB funded project has been deleted.
19. Brush Control and Rainwater Harvesting are not intended as “recommendations”, but are presented in the conservation subchapter as “State Water Conservation Programs and Guides”. This material is presented solely for reader education and not intended as a water management strategy discussion. Rainwater Harvesting is removed from the list of conservation strategies in Ch 5 Sec 5.3.4.
20. A description of capital cost elements are included in Ch 5 Sec 5.2.1.
21. Unit costs in Strategy J-66 (Brackettville-Spoford) and J-84 (Val Verde County Other) have been verified and are in agreement with DB22.
22. Strategies J-30, J-32, J-34, J-64 and J-88 have been eliminated and a discussion pertaining to mining conservation has been added in Chapter 5 Section 5.2.2.
23. Strategies J-5 and J-45 Project 2a have been revised to include environmental flow standards.
24. The costing tool’s output report is provided for all required projects and capital costs are presented for all project strategies in Chapter 5 Tables 5-2 and 5-3.

25. An explanation of the process of selecting recommended strategies is added in the first paragraph of Chapter 5 Section 5.2.4.
26. The reasoning for not including seawater desalination is included in the second paragraph of Chapter 5 Section 5.2.4.
27. Third-party social and economic impacts of moving water from rural and agricultural areas is addressed in the third paragraph of Chapter 5 Section 5.2.4.
28. Third-party social and economic impacts of moving water from rural and agricultural areas is addressed in the first paragraph of Chapter 6 Section 6.
29. Chapter 1 Section 1.4.5 describes water quality issues relevant to the Plateau Region. Major impacts of recommended water management strategies on key parameters of water quality are discussed in the fifth paragraph of Chapter 6 Section 6.1.
30. Chapter 6 Section 6.4 is added to discuss unmet water needs that match the final DB22 report. Center Point and Center Point Taylor were corrected in the database to not show as having unmet needs. A new strategy was generated for Laughlin AFB to take care of their needs.
31. Entities evaluated for emergency response with 180 days or less of remaining supply is stated in the second paragraph of Chapter 7 Section 7.4.
32. Chapter 7 Table 7-8 is revised to include drought triggers and actions. No new triggers and actions were generated, so table shows that recommendations are to follow existing triggers and actions noted in Table 7-1.
33. Model drought contingency plans are discussed in Chapter 7 Section 7.5.4 and provided by link to the Plateau Region Water Plan website.
34. Model drought contingency plans are discussed in Chapter 7 Section 7.5.4 and provided by link to the Plateau Region Water Plan website.
35. Chapter 7 Section 7.6 is modified to recognize drought management strategies J-14 and J-18 for Bandera County-Other.
36. A discussion pertaining to recent implementation of drought contingency measures is added as the fifth paragraph of Chapter 7 Section 7.2.
37. The Texas Public Information Act is added to the first paragraph of Chapter 10 Section 10.3.
38. Chapter 11 Table 11-1 implementation survey report has been added.
39. Chapter 11 Table 11-6 has been replaced and does not contain Vegetative Management strategies. Chapter 11 Tables 11-7 and 11-8 have been added and a narrative has been added in Sec 11.2.6 that compare recommended and alternate WMS *projects*.

LEVEL 2:

1. Text on page ES-9 is revised to not show table numbers. A listing of all TWDB tables are now provided on the ES Appendix cover page.
2. The spelling of Agriculture is corrected on page ES-12 of the Executive Summary.
3. The table on Chapter 3 Page 3-12 has been redesigned as a bulleted list. The table on page 3-16 is made into Table 3-5, which results in renumbering the previous Table 3-5 on page 3-26 to Table 3-6.
4. Alluvial Aquifers Report (2010) has been sent to UGRA for posting on PWPG website.
5. Corrections made in Chapter 3 Table 3-4.
6. Corrections made in Chapter 3 Table 3-4.
7. Corrections made in Chapter 3 Table 3-4.
8. "Error! Reference source not found.2" is corrected in Chapter 5 Section 5.3.4.
9. Additional entities required to submit WCPs are added to Chapter 5 section 5.3.5.
10. Conservation BMPs reference is replaced with new website in Chapter 5 Section 5.3.3.
11. Statement pertaining to Oakmont Saddle Mountain funding has been removed from Chapter 5 Strategy J-79.
12. Reference to first planning period has been deleted in Chapter 7 Section 7.5.
13. An attempt has been made to properly rename GIS files according to the naming convention outlines in the Guidelines.
14. An attempt has been made to include all required attribute fields in the GIS data.

APPENDIX 10C

RESPONSE TO TPWD COMMENTS

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RESPONSES TO TPWD COMMENTS

The Plateau Water Planning Group (PWPG) thanks the TPWD staff for their technical review and comments on the 2020 Plateau IPP and wish to express their appreciation for the agencies active role in the Plateau Regional Water Planning process. The PWPG would also like to thank the TPWD staff for recognizing the concerted effort that the Planning Group has made to include environmental needs in the develop of this regional water plan as shown in the following key phrases contained in the agency's comments:

- *It is clear the PWPG recognizes the importance of protecting the natural and ecological resources of the Region as they are important economic drivers for the area.*
- *TPWD commends the Plateau Region J Water Planning Group for its emphasis on water conservation and reuse.*
- *The Plateau Region J IPP includes thorough descriptions of natural resources and acknowledges the importance of protecting those resources.*
- *As in previous plans, the IPP includes a good discussion of major springs and seeps that occur in the region and recognizes the important ecological water supply function that all springs perform.*
- *TPWD applauds this approach to defining groundwater availability and supports the PWPG recommendation for more groundwater/surface water interaction studies such as streamflow gain/loss studies and is interested in assisting regional entities in developing and implementing such studies.*
- *TPWD appreciates the PWPG's efforts this planning cycle regarding nomination of ecologically stream segments.*

Following are responses to TPWD comments on the 2020 Plateau IPP:

1. TPWD - Suggestion to include a table listing federal and state listed species and species of greatest conservation need.
PWPG – The list is quite extensive, so a discussion is provided in Chapter 1 Section 1.2.7 that discusses the list, and the link taking the reader to the TPWD website is updated.
2. TPWD – Suggestion to mention the Senate Bill 3 environmental flows process.
PWPG – A discussion pertaining to the environmental flows process is added in the last paragraph of Chapter 2 Section 2.3.
3. TPWD – Suggestion to correct a typo in the title of Table 5B-3.
PWPG – Typo has been corrected.
4. TPWD – Suggestion to include a description of the ecologically unique stream segment nomination process.
PWPG – The nomination process has been added to the discussion in Chapter 8 Section 8.5.