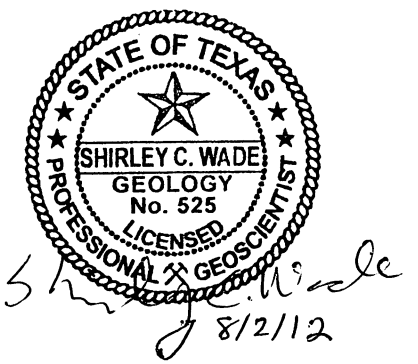
GAM RUN 10-012 MAG: MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13

by Shirley C. Wade, Ph.D., P.G.
Texas Water Development Board
Groundwater Resources Division
Groundwater Availability Modeling Section
(512) 936-0883
August 2, 2012



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

The modeled available groundwater for Groundwater Management Area 13 for the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers is summarized in Table 1, 2, and 3 for use in the regional water planning process. These values are also listed by decade for each aquifer by county (Table 4), river basin (Table 5), regional water planning group (Table 6), and groundwater conservation district (Table 7). The modeled available groundwater estimates for the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers range from approximately 399,000 acre-feet per year in 2010 to 425,000 acre-feet per year in 2060 (Table 4). The estimates were extracted from results of Groundwater Availability Model Run 09-034, scenario 4, which meets the desired future conditions adopted by members of Groundwater Management Area 13.

This report reflects the official release of the revised groundwater district boundaries by the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ). Specifically, this report reflects the division of modeled available groundwater between the Gonzales County Underground Water Conservation District and Plum Creek Conservation District based on the new groundwater conservation district boundaries.

REQUESTOR:

Mr. Mike Mahoney from the Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District acting on behalf of Groundwater Management Area 13.

DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST:

In a letter dated April 13, 2010 and received by the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) on April 15, 2010, Mr. Mike Mahoney provided the TWDB with the desired future conditions of the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers adopted by the groundwater conservation districts in Groundwater Management Area 13. The desired future conditions for the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers, as described in Resolution R 2010-01 and adopted April 9, 2010 by the groundwater conservation districts within Groundwater Management Area 13, are described below:

- "In reference to GAM Run 09-034, the committee has considered, the base scenario of an average drawdown of 22 feet, scenario 2 an average drawdown of 22 feet, scenario 3 an average drawdown of 23 feet and scenario 4 an average drawdown of 23 feet;"
- "The district members of Groundwater Management Area 13, adopt scenario 4, and an average drawdown of 23 feet for the Sparta, Weches, Queen City, Reklaw, Carrizo, and the Wilcox Aquifers"

In response to receiving the adopted desired future conditions, TWDB has estimated the modeled available groundwater for the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta Aquifers in Groundwater Management Area 13.

METHODS:

Groundwater Management Area 13, located in south central Texas, includes the southern part of the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers (Figure 1). For the previously completed Groundwater Availability Model Run 09-034 (Wade and Jigmond, 2010) average recharge and evapotranspiration rates and initial streamflows based on the historical calibration-verification runs, representing 1981 to 1999 were summarized. These averages were then used for each year of the 61-year predictive simulations along with pumping specified by Groundwater Management Area 13 members in four scenarios. The results of the pumping scenarios were reviewed by members of Groundwater Management Area 13 to develop their desired future conditions. Model scenario 4 resulted in an overall average drawdown of 23 feet for the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers and for the Weches and Reklaw confining units. The pumping for scenario 4 was extracted from the model results and divided by county, river basin, regional water planning area and groundwater conservation district within Groundwater Management Area 13 (Figure 2).

Modeled Available Groundwater and Permitting
As defined in Chapter 36 of the Texas Water Code, "modeled available groundwater" is the estimated average amount of water that may be produced annually to achieve a desired future condition. Groundwater conservation districts are required to consider modeled available groundwater, along with several other factors, when issuing permits in order to manage groundwater production to achieve the desired future condition(s). The other factors districts must consider include annual precipitation and production patterns, the estimated amount of pumping exempt from permitting, existing permits, and a reasonable estimate of actual groundwater production under existing permits. The estimated amount of pumping exempt from permitting, which the Texas Water Development Board is required to develop after soliciting input from applicable groundwater conservation districts, will be provided in a separate report.

PARAMETERS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

The parameters and assumptions for the groundwater availability model for the southern part of the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers are described below:

- Version 2.01 of the groundwater availability model for the southern part of the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers was used for this analysis
- See Deeds and others (2003) and Kelley and others (2004) for assumptions and limitations of the groundwater availability model for the southern part of the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers.
- The model includes eight layers representing:
- the Sparta Aquifer (layer 1),
- the Weches Formation (layer 2),
- the Queen City Aquifer (layer 3),
- the Reklaw Formation (layer 4),
- the Carrizo Aquifer (layer 5),
- the upper and where the upper is missing, the middle Wilcox Aquifer (layer 6),
- the middle Wilcox Aquifer (layer 7), and
- the lower Wilcox Aquifer (layer 8).

- Groundwater in the groundwater availability model for the southern portion of the Queen City, Sparta, and Carrizo-Wilcox aquifers ranges from fresh to saline (Kelley and others, 2004).

- The root mean square error (a measure of the difference between simulated and measured water levels during model calibration) in the entire model for 1999 is 23 feet for the Sparta Aquifer, 18 feet for the Queen City aquifer, and 33 feet for the Carrizo aquifer (Kelley and others, 2004).

- Recharge rates, evapotranspiration rates, and initial streamflows are averages of historic estimates from 1981 to 1999.

RESULTS:

The modeled available groundwater for the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer that achieves the desired future conditions adopted by Groundwater Management Area 13 increases from 375,654 to 404,000 acre-feet per year between 2010 and 2060 (Table 1). The modeled available groundwater for the Queen City Aquifer in Groundwater Management Area 13 declines from 16,311 to 14,538 acre-feet per year over the same time period (Table 2). The modeled available groundwater for the Sparta Aquifer in Groundwater Management Area 13 declines from 6,800 to 6,365 acre-feet per year (Table 3). The modeled available groundwater in tables 1, 2, and 3 has been summarized by county, river basin, and regional water planning area for use in the regional water planning process.

The modeled available groundwater is also summarized by county (Table 4), river basin (Table 5), regional water planning area (Table 6), and groundwater conservation district (Table 7). In Table 7, the modeled available groundwater among all districts has been calculated both excluding and including areas outside the jurisdiction of a groundwater conservation district.

LIMITATIONS:

The groundwater model used in completing this analysis is the best available scientific tool that can be used to meet the stated objective(s). To the extent that this analysis will be used for planning purposes and/or regulatory purposes related to pumping in the past and into the future, it is important to recognize the assumptions and limitations associated with the use of the results. In reviewing the use of models in environmental regulatory decision making, the National Research Council (2007) noted:

> "Models will always be constrained by computational limitations, assumptions, and knowledge gaps. They can best be viewed as tools to help inform decisions rather than as machines to generate truth or make decisions. Scientific advances will never make it possible to build a perfect model that accounts for every aspect of reality or to prove that a given model is correct in all respects for a particular regulatory application. These characteristics make evaluation of a regulatory model more complex than solely a comparison of measurement data with model results."

A key aspect of using the groundwater model to evaluate historic groundwater flow conditions includes the assumptions about the location in the aquifer where historic pumping was placed. Understanding the amount and location of historic pumping is as important as evaluating the volume of groundwater flow into and out of the district, between aquifers within the district (as applicable), interactions with surface water (as applicable), recharge to the aquifer system (as applicable), and other metrics that describe the impacts of that pumping. In addition, assumptions regarding precipitation, recharge, and streamflow are specific to a particular historic time period.

Because the application of the groundwater model was designed to address regional scale questions, the results are most effective on a regional scale. The TWDB makes no warranties or representations relating to the actual conditions of any aquifer at a particular location or at a particular time.

It is important for groundwater conservation districts to monitor groundwater pumping and overall conditions of the aquifer. Because of the limitations of the groundwater model and the assumptions in this analysis, it is important that the groundwater conservation districts work with the TWDB to refine this analysis in the future given the reality of how the aquifer responds to the actual amount and location of pumping now and in the future. Historic precipitation patterns also need to be placed in context as future climatic conditions, such as dry and wet year precipitation patterns, may differ and affect groundwater flow conditions.

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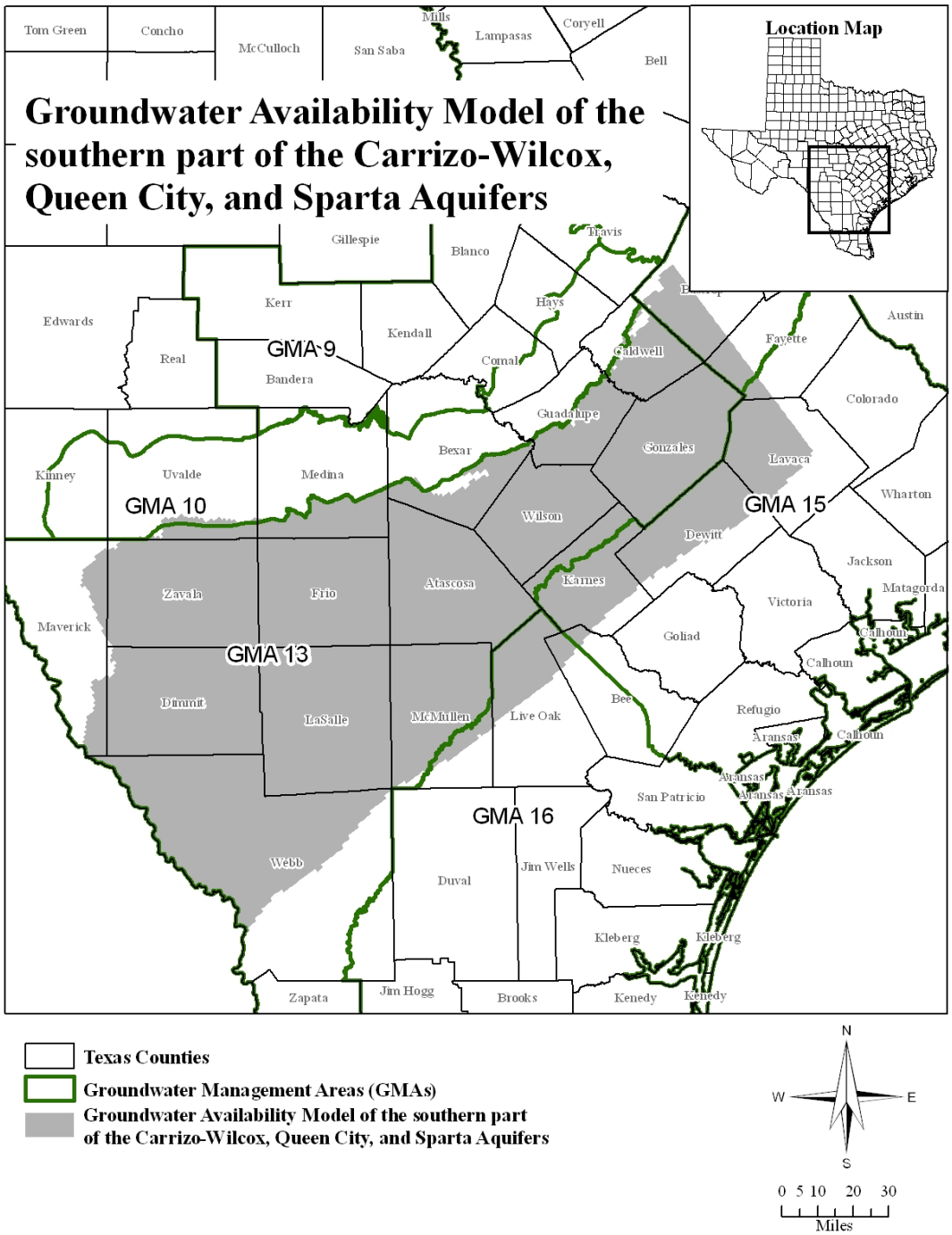

FIGURE 1.MAP SHOWING THE AREAS COVERED BY THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY MODEL FOR THE SOUTHERN PART OF THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS.

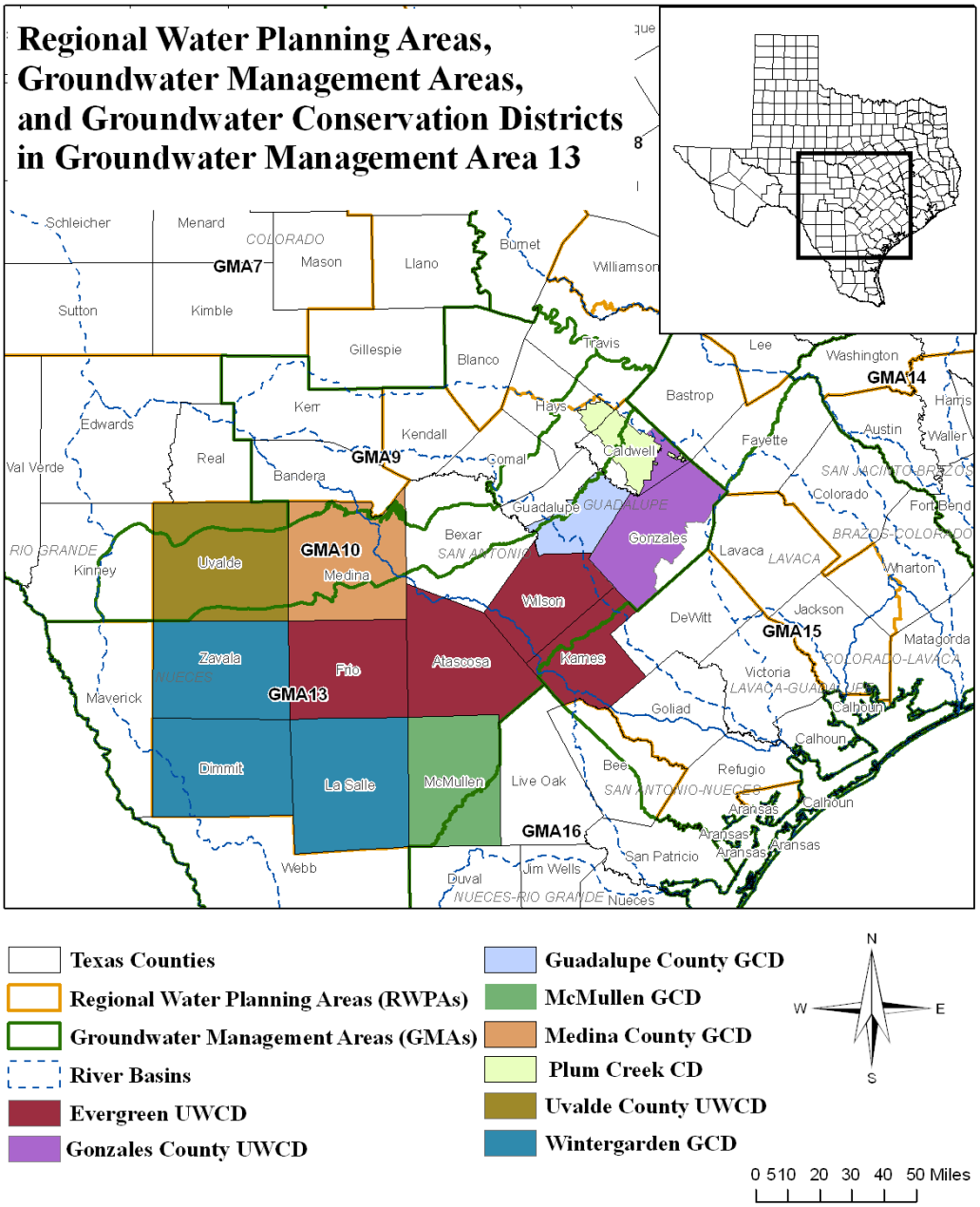

FIGURE 2. MAP SHOWING REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREAS, GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREAS, GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS (GCDS), COUNTIES, AND RIVER BASINS IN AND NEIGHBORING GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13. UWCD REFERS TO UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT.

TABLE 1. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER BY DECADE FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX AQUIFER IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ARE DIVIDED BY COUNTY, RIVER BASIN, AND REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREA.

County	Regional Water Planning Area	Basin	Year					
			2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Atascosa	L	Nueces	67,829	68,656	70,249	71,827	73,666	75,688
		San Antonio	120	120	120	120	120	120
Bexar	L	Nueces	14,198	14,198	14,198	14,198	14,198	14,198
		San Antonio	12,080	12,080	12,080	12,080	12,080	11,909
Caldwell	L	Colorado	593	593	593	593	593	593
		Guadalupe	43,951	43,951	43,543	43,543	42,967	42,967
Dimmit	L	Nueces	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253	3,253
		Rio Grande	106	106	106	106	106	106
Frio	L	Nueces	81,551	79,089	76,734	74,439	72,222	70,030
Gonzales	L	Guadalupe	52,268	62,101	70,102	75,576	75,755	75,755
		Lavaca	215	215	215	215	215	215
Guadalupe	L	Guadalupe	8,868	9,460	9,910	11,648	12,168	12,668
		San Antonio	1,373	1,373	1,373	1,373	1,373	1,373
Karnes	L	Guadalupe	185	195	207	215	220	224
		Nueces	87	92	97	101	103	105
		San Antonio	787	830	878	915	936	951
La Salle	L	Nueces	6,454	6,454	6,454	6,454	6,454	6,454
Maverick	M	Nueces	777	777	777	472	472	472
		Rio Grande	1,266	1,266	1,247	1,205	1,098	1,060
McMullen	N	Nueces	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819
Medina	L	Nueces	2,542	2,519	2,507	2,507	2,507	2,507
		San Antonio	26	26	26	26	26	26
Uvalde	L	Nueces	2,971	1,230	828	828	828	828
Webb	M	Nueces	92	92	92	92	92	92
		Rio Grande	824	824	824	824	824	824
Wilson	L	Guadalupe	624	672	731	791	861	938
		Nueces	7,151	7,311	7,505	7,703	7,932	8,185
		San Antonio	27,785	29,003	30,481	31,992	33,738	35,671
Zavala	L	Nueces	35,859	35,859	35,521	35,388	35,288	34,969
Total			**375,654**	**384,164**	**392,470**	**400,303**	**401,914**	**404,000**

TABLE 2. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER BY DECADE FOR THE QUEEN CITY AQUIFER IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ARE DIVIDED BY COUNTY, RIVER BASIN, AND REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREA.

County	Regional Water Planning Area	Basin	Year					
			2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Atascosa	L	Nueces	4,546	4,546	4,513	4,405	4,300	4,202
Caldwell	L	Guadalupe	306	306	306	306	306	306
Dimmit	L	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Rio Grande	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frio	L	Nueces	4,748	4,582	4,422	4,270	4,124	3,983
Gonzales	L	Guadalupe	5,030	5,030	5,030	5,030	5,030	5,030
		Lavaca	35	35	35	35	35	35
Guadalupe	L	Guadalupe	0	0	0	0	0	0
Karnes	L	Guadalupe	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
		San Antonio	0	0	0	0	0	0
La Salle	L	Nueces	1	1	1	1	1	1
McMullen	N	Nueces	136	136	136	136	136	136
Webb	M	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Rio Grande	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilson	L	Guadalupe	128	114	101	90	80	72
		Nueces	148	132	117	104	93	83
		San Antonio	1,233	1,094	973	866	772	690
Zavala	L	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total			**16,311**	**15,976**	**15,634**	**15,243**	**14,877**	**14,538**

TABLE 3. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER BY DECADE FOR THE SPARTA AQUIFER IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ARE DIVIDED BY COUNTY, RIVER BASIN, AND REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREA.

County	Regional Water Planning Area	Basin	Year					
			2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Atascosa	L	Nueces	1,191	1,130	1,082	1,042	1,013	994
Dimmit	L	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
Frio	L	Nueces	729	698	674	650	624	601
Gonzales	L	Guadalupe	3,529	3,529	3,529	3,529	3,529	3,529
		Lavaca	23	23	23	23	23	23
Karnes	L	Guadalupe	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
		San Antonio	0	0	0	0	0	0
La Salle	L	Nueces	987	987	987	987	987	987
McMullen	N	Nueces	90	90	90	90	90	90
Webb	M	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
		Rio Grande	0	0	0	0	0	0
Wilson	L	Guadalupe	23	20	18	16	14	13
		Nueces	55	49	44	39	34	31
		San Antonio	173	154	137	121	108	97
Zavala	L	Nueces	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total			**6,800**	**6,680**	**6,584**	**6,497**	**6,422**	**6,365**

TABLE 4. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS SUMMARIZED BY COUNTY IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13 FOR EACH DECADE BETWEEN 2010 AND 2060. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR.

County	Year					
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Atascosa	73,686	74,452	75,964	77,394	79,099	81,004
Bexar	26,278	26,278	26,278	26,278	26,278	26,107
Caldwell	44,850	44,850	44,442	44,442	43,866	43,866
Dimmit	3,359	3,359	3,359	3,359	3,359	3,359
Frio	87,028	84,369	81,830	79,359	76,970	74,614
Gonzales	61,100	70,933	78,934	84,408	84,587	84,587
Guadalup	10,241	10,833	11,283	13,021	13,541	14,041
Karnes	1,059	1,117	1,182	1,231	1,259	1,280
La Salle	7,442	7,442	7,442	7,442	7,442	7,442
Maverick	2,043	2,043	2,024	1,677	1,570	1,532
McMullen	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045
Medina	2,568	2,545	2,533	2,533	2,533	2,533
Uvalde	2,971	1,230	828	828	828	828
Webb	916	916	916	916	916	916
Wilson	37,320	38,549	40,107	41,722	43,632	45,780
Zavala	35,859	35,859	35,521	35,388	35,288	34,969
Total	**398,765**	**406,820**	**414,688**	**422,043**	**423,213**	**424,903**

TABLE 5. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS SUMMARIZED BY RIVER BASIN IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13 FOR EACH DECADE BETWEEN 2010 AND 2060. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR.

Basin	Year					
	2010	2020	2030	2040	2050	2060
Colorado	593	593	593	593	593	593
Guadalupe	114,912	125,378	133,477	140,744	140,930	141,502
Lavaca	273	273	273	273	273	273
Nueces	237,214	233,700	232,100	230,805	230,236	229,708
Rio Grande	2,196	2,196	2,177	2,135	2,028	1,990
San Antonio	43,577	44,680	46,068	47,493	49,153	50,837
Total	**398,765**	**406,820**	**414,688**	**422,043**	**423,213**	**424,903**

TABLE 6. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS SUMMARIZED BY REGIONAL WATER PLANNING AREA IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13 FOR EACH DECADE BETWEEN 2010 AND 2060. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR.

Regional Water	Year					
	2010	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
L	393,761	401,816	409,703	417,405	418,682	420,410
M	2,959	2,959	2,940	2,593	2,486	2,448
N	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045
Total	**398,765**	**406,820**	**414,688**	**422,043**	**423,213**	**424,903**

TABLE 7. MODELED AVAILABLE GROUNDWATER FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS SUMMARIZED BY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT (GCD) IN GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT AREA 13 FOR EACH DECADE BETWEEN 2010 AND 2060. RESULTS ARE IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR. UWCD REFERS TO UNDERGROUND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT.

Groundwater Conservation District	Year					
	2010	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Evergreen UWCD	199,093	198,487	199,083	199,706	200,960	202,678
Gonzales County UWCD*	86,846	96,679	104,680	110,154	110,333	110,333
Guadalupe County	10,241	10,833	11,283	13,021	13,541	14,041
McMullen	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045	2,045
Medina County	2,568	2,545	2,533	2,533	2,533	2,533
Plum Creek	18,122	18,122	17,714	17,714	17,138	17,138
Uvalde County UWCD	2,971	1,230	828	828	828	828
Wintergarden	46,660	46,660	46,322	46,189	46,089	45,770
Total (excluding non-district areas)	**368,546**	**376,601**	**384,488**	**392,190**	**393,467**	**395,366**
No District	30,219	30,219	30,200	29,853	29,746	29,537
Total (including non-district areas)	**398,765**	**406,820**	**414,688**	**422,043**	**423,213**	**424,903**

*Note: Gonzales County UWCD includes area in Caldwell County

Appendix A

Estimates of total pumping split by aquifer layers for Groundwater Conservation Districts

Evergreen Underground Water Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Sparta	2,171	2,051	1,955	1,868	1,793	1,736
	Queen City	10,803	10,468	10,126	9,735	9,369	9,030
	Carrizo	151,373	151,222	152,256	153,357	155,052	157,166
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	375	375	375	375	375	375
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	371	371	371	371	371	371
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000	34,000
	Total	**199,093**	**198,487**	**199,083**	**199,706**	**200,960**	**202,678**

Gonzales County Underground Water Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Sparta	3,552	3,552	3,552	3,552	3,552	3,552
	Queen City	5,349	5,349	5,349	5,349	5,349	5,349
	Carrizo	45,884	55,717	63,718	69,192	69,371	69,371
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	12,159	12,159	12,159	12,159	12,159	12,159
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	19,902	19,902	19,902	19,902	19,902	19,902
	Total	**86,846**	**96,679**	**104,680**	**110,154**	**110,333**	**110,333**

Guadalupe County Groundwater Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Carrizo	5,500	6,239	6,689	8,427	9,000	9,500
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	3,194	3,047	3,047	3,047	2,994	2,994
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	1,547	1,547	1,547	1,547	1,547	1,547
	Total	**10,241**	**10,833**	**11,283**	**13,021**	**13,541**	**14,041**

McMullen Groundwater Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Sparta	90	90	90	90	90	90
	Queen City	136	136	136	136	136	136
	Carrizo	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819	1,819
	Total	**2,045**	**2,045**	**2,045**	**2,045**	**2,045**	**2,045**

Medina County Groundwater Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Carrizo	400	400	400	400	400	400
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	1,248	1,248	1,248	1,248	1,248	1,248
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	920	897	885	885	885	885
	Total	**2,568**	**2,545**	**2,533**	**2,533**	**2,533**	**2,533**

Plum Creek Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Queen City	22	22	22	22	22	22
	Carrizo	3,498	3,498	3,498	3,498	3,498	3,498
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	0	0	0	0	0	0
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	4,869	4,869	4,869	4,869	4,293	4,293
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	9,733	9,733	9,325	9,325	9,325	9,325
	Total	**18,122**	**18,122**	**17,714**	**17,714**	**17,138**	**17,138**

Uvalde County Underground Water Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Carrizo	828	828	828	828	828	828
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	2,143	402	0	0	0	0
	Total	**2,971**	**1,230**	**828**	**828**	**828**	**828**

Wintergarden Groundwater Conservation District		**Year**					
	Unit or Layer	**2010**	**2020**	**2030**	**2040**	**2050**	**2060**
Pumping	Sparta	987	987	987	987	987	987
	Queen City	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Carrizo	31,990	31,990	31,652	31,519	31,419	31,100
	Wilcox (Layer 6)	9,259	9,259	9,259	9,259	9,259	9,259
	Wilcox (Layer 7)	4,007	4,007	4,007	4,007	4,007	4,007
	Wilcox (Layer 8)	416	416	416	416	416	416
	Total	**46,660**	**46,660**	**46,322**	**46,189**	**46,089**	**45,770**