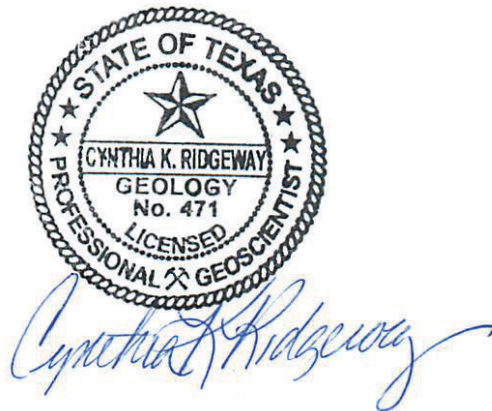

GAM RUN 19-022: RUSK COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT MANAGEMENT PLAN

By Grayson Dowlearn
Texas Water Development Board
Groundwater Division
Groundwater Availability Modeling Department
(512) 475-1552
January 28, 2020



Cynthia K. Ridgeway is the manager of the Groundwater Availability Department and is responsible for the oversight of work performed by Grayson Dowlearn under her direct supervision. The seal appearing on this document was authorized by Cynthia K. Ridgeway, P.G. 471 on January 28, 2020.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

Texas State Water Code, Section 36.1071, Subsection (h) (Texas Water Code, 2011), states that, in developing its groundwater management plan, a groundwater conservation district shall use groundwater availability modeling information provided by the Executive Administrator of the Texas Water Development Board (TWDB) in conjunction with any available site-specific information provided by the district for review and comment to the Executive Administrator.

The TWDB provides data and information to the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District in two parts. Part 1 is the Estimated Historical Water Use/State Water Plan dataset report, which will be provided to you separately by the TWDB Groundwater Technical Assistance Department. Please direct questions about the water data report to Mr. Stephen Allen at 512-463-7317 or stephen.allen@twdb.texas.gov. Part 2 is the required groundwater availability modeling information and this information includes:

1. the annual amount of recharge from precipitation, if any, to the groundwater resources within the district;
2. for each aquifer within the district, the annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface-water bodies, including lakes, streams, and rivers; and
3. the annual volume of flow into and out of the district within each aquifer and between aquifers in the district.

The groundwater management plan for the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District should be adopted by the district on or before July 10, 2020 and submitted to the executive administrator of the TWDB on or before August 9, 2020. The current management plan for the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District expires on October 8, 2020.

We used one groundwater availability model to estimate the management plan information for the aquifers within the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District. Information for the Carrizo-Wilcox and Queen City aquifers is from version 2.01 of the groundwater availability model for the northern part of the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers (Kelley and others, 2004).

This report replaces the results of GAM Run 14-011 (Goswami, 2014), as the approach used for analyzing model results has been since refined to more accurately delineate flows between hydraulically connected units. Tables 1 and 2 summarize the groundwater availability model data required by statute and Figures 1 and 2 show the area of the models from which the values in the tables were extracted. If, after review of the figures, the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District determines that the district boundaries used in the assessment do not reflect current conditions, please notify the TWDB at your earliest convenience.

METHODS:

In accordance with the provisions of the Texas State Water Code, Section 36.1071, Subsection (h), the groundwater availability model mentioned above was used to estimate information for the Rusk County Groundwater Conservation District management plan. Water budgets were extracted for the Carrizo-Wilcox and Queen City aquifers (1980-1999). We used ZONEBUDGET Version 3.01 (Harbaugh, 2009) to extract water budgets from the model results. The average annual water budget values for recharge, surface-water outflow, inflow to the district, outflow from the district, and the flow between aquifers within the district are summarized in this report.

PARAMETERS AND ASSUMPTIONS:

Carrizo-Wilcox and Queen City aquifers

- We used version 2.01 of the groundwater availability model for the northern part of the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers. See Fryar and others (2003) and Kelley and others (2004) for assumptions and limitations of the

groundwater availability model for the northern part of the Carrizo-Wilcox, Queen City, and Sparta aquifers.

- This groundwater availability model includes eight layers, which generally represent the Sparta Aquifer (Layer 1), the Weches Formation confining unit (Layer 2), the Queen City Aquifer (Layer 3), the Reklaw Formation confining unit (Layer 4), the Carrizo Formation (Layer 5), the Upper Wilcox (Layer 6), the Middle Wilcox (Layer 7), and the Lower Wilcox (Layer 8).
- Individual water budgets for the district were determined for the Queen City Aquifer (Layer 3), and the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer (Layers 5 through 8, collectively). The Sparta Aquifer does not exist within the district boundaries.
- Water budget terms were averaged for the period 1980 to 1999 (stress periods 6 through 25)
- The model was run with MODFLOW-96 (Harbaugh and McDonald, 1996).

RESULTS:

A groundwater budget summarizes the amount of water entering and leaving the aquifer according to the groundwater availability model. Selected groundwater budget components listed below were extracted from the model results for the aquifers located within the district and averaged over the historical calibration periods, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

1. Precipitation recharge—the areally distributed recharge sourced from precipitation falling on the outcrop areas of the aquifers (where the aquifer is exposed at land surface) within the district.
2. Surface-water outflow—the total water discharging from the aquifer (outflow) to surface-water features such as streams, reservoirs, and springs.
3. Flow into and out of district—the lateral flow within the aquifer between the district and adjacent counties.
4. Flow between aquifers—the net vertical flow between the aquifer and adjacent aquifers or confining units. This flow is controlled by the relative water levels in each aquifer and aquifer properties of each aquifer or confining unit that define the amount of leakage that occurs.

The information needed for the district's management plan is summarized in Tables 1 and 2. It is important to note that sub-regional water budgets are not exact. This is due to the size of the model cells and the approach used to extract data from the model. To avoid double accounting, a model cell that straddles a political boundary, such as a district or county boundary, is assigned to one side of the boundary based on the location of the centroid of the model cell. For example, if a cell contains two counties, the cell is assigned to the county where the centroid of the cell is located.

TABLE 1: SUMMARIZED INFORMATION FOR THE CARRIZO-WILCOX AQUIFER THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE RUSK COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. ALL VALUES ARE REPORTED IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST 1 ACRE-FOOT.

Management Plan requirement	Aquifer or confining unit	Results
Estimated annual amount of recharge from precipitation to the district	Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer	70,358
Estimated annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface water body including lakes, streams, and rivers.	Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer	25,743
Estimated annual volume of flow into the district within each aquifer in the district	Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer	4,016
Estimated annual volume of flow out of the district within each aquifer in the district	Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer	14,269
Estimated net annual volume of flow between each aquifer in the district	Into the Carrizo-Wilcox Aquifer from the Reklaw Formation confining unit	2,147

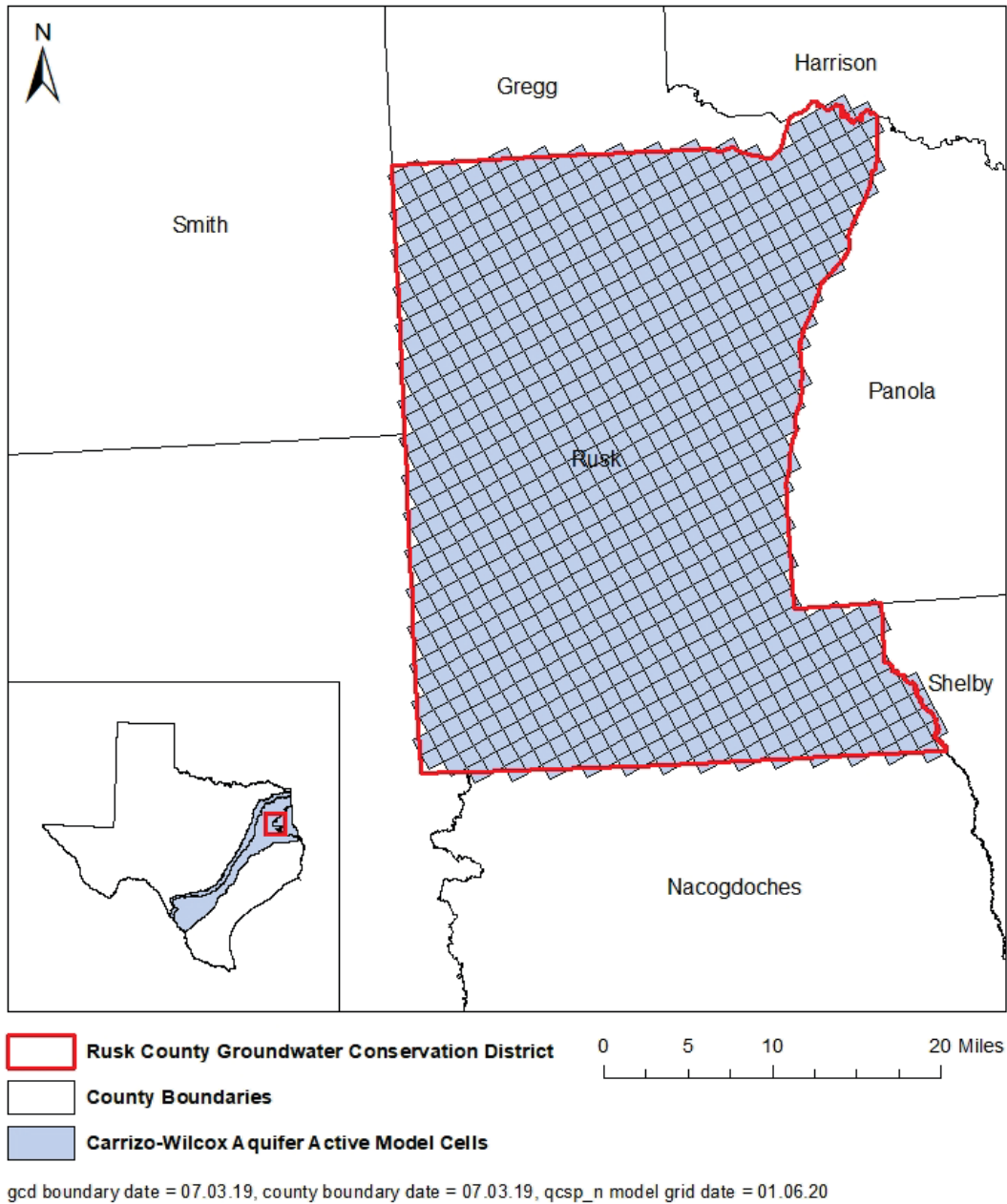


FIGURE 1: AREA OF THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY MODEL FOR THE NORTHERN PART OF THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS FROM WHICH THE INFORMATION IN TABLE 1 WAS EXTRACTED (THE CARRIZO-WILCOX AQUIFER EXTENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT BOUNDARY).

TABLE 2: SUMMARIZED INFORMATION FOR THE QUEEN CITY AQUIFER THAT IS NEEDED FOR THE RUSK COUNTY GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT'S GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN. ALL VALUES ARE REPORTED IN ACRE-FEET PER YEAR AND ROUNDED TO THE NEAREST 1 ACRE-FOOT.

Management Plan requirement	Aquifer or confining unit	Results
Estimated annual amount of recharge from precipitation to the district	Queen City Aquifer	1,200
Estimated annual volume of water that discharges from the aquifer to springs and any surface water body including lakes, streams, and rivers	Queen City Aquifer	227
Estimated annual volume of flow into the district within each aquifer in the district	Queen City Aquifer	63
Estimated annual volume of flow out of the district within each aquifer in the district	Queen City Aquifer	62
Estimated net annual volume of flow between each aquifer in the district	From the Queen City Aquifer into the Reklaw Formation confining unit	136
	Into the Queen City Aquifer from the Queen City Formation	75

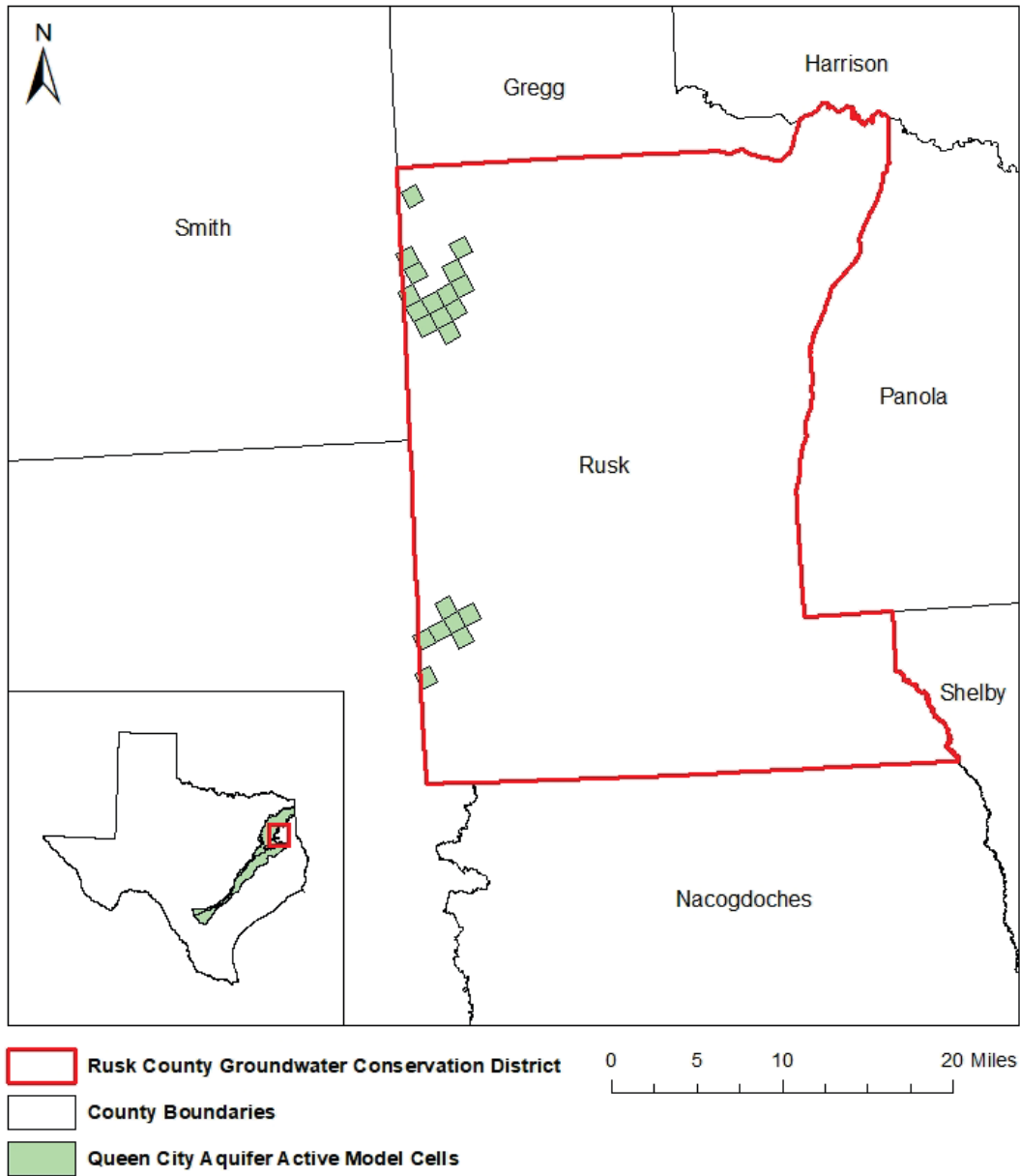


FIGURE 2: AREA OF THE GROUNDWATER AVAILABILITY MODEL FOR THE NORTHERN PART OF THE CARRIZO-WILCOX, QUEEN CITY, AND SPARTA AQUIFERS FROM WHICH THE INFORMATION IN TABLE 2 WAS EXTRACTED (THE QUEEN CITY AQUIFER EXTENT WITHIN THE DISTRICT BOUNDARY).

LIMITATIONS:

The groundwater models used in completing this analysis is the best available scientific tool that can be used to meet the stated objectives. 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 interaction with streams are specific to particular historic time periods.

Because the application of the groundwater models was designed to address regional scale questions, the results are most effective on a regional scale. The TWDB makes no warranties or representations related 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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