



## DROUGHT PREPAREDNESS COUNCIL

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JACK COLLEY  
Council Chairman

April 12, 2007

**TO:** Governor Rick Perry  
Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst  
Secretary of State Roger Williams  
Senator Mario Gallegos, President Pro Tempore of the Senate  
Speaker Tom Craddick, Speaker of the House, State of Texas  
Senator Steve Ogden, Chairman, Senate Finance Committee  
Senator Kip Averitt, Chairman, Senate Natural Resources Committee  
Senator John Corona, Chairman, Senate Transportation and Homeland Security Committee  
Representative Warren Chisum, Chairman, House Appropriations Committee  
Representative Robert Puente, Chairman, House Natural Resources Committee  
Representative Sid Miller, Chairman, House Agriculture & Livestock Committee  
Representative Aaron Pena, Chairman, House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee  
Deirdre Delisi, Governor's Chief of Staff  
Steven McCraw, Director of Homeland Security

**FROM:** Jack Colley, Chairman, Drought Preparedness Council

**SUBJECT:** Statewide Drought Situation Report

### 1. Next Council Meeting

May 17, 2007, at 2:00 p.m. at the Texas Department of Public Safety Headquarters in the Governor's Conference Room, Governor's Division of Emergency Management, 5805 N. Lamar Blvd., Austin, Texas.

Jack Colley, Chairman  
Governor's Division of Emergency Mgmt

Pal Scully, Member  
Texas Department of Agriculture

Scott Alley, Member  
Texas Department of Transportation

Bill Billingsley, Member  
Texas Commission on Environmental  
Quality

James Hull, Member  
Texas Forest Service

John Sutton, Member  
Texas Water Development Board

Dr. Travis Miller, Member  
Texas Cooperative Extension

Harvey R. Everheart, Member  
Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts

Thomas Walker, Member  
Office of the Governor  
Economic Development & Tourism

Gus Garcia, Member  
Office of Rural Community Affairs

Richard Egg, Member  
State Soil & Water Conservation Board

Cindy Loeffler, Member  
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department

Paul Tabor, Member  
Texas Department of State Health Services

Judith Jenness, Member  
Texas Department of Housing and  
Community Affairs

Dr. John W. Nielsen-Gammon, Member  
Office of the State Climatologist

## **2. General Conditions**

Strange winter weather continued across Texas in March and early April. According to preliminary data, and after a very dry February, March 2007 was the wettest March on record for Texas as a whole. Additionally, records were established in the High Plains, the Low Rolling Plains, North Central Texas, and the Edwards Plateau. The only corners of the state that did not receive above-normal rainfall over the past month were extreme northeast Texas, extreme East Texas, and extreme West Texas. Except for the former two areas, nearly the entire state has received above normal precipitation over the past three and six months.

The precipitation this winter and early spring have eliminated long-term precipitation deficits in the High Plains, the Low Rolling Plains, the Trans Pecos, and Southeast Texas. Other areas, particularly north-central and northeast Texas, remain under long-term drought despite plenty of water recently. In both areas, rainfall deficits during the past two years rank those areas around the 10th-15th driest such periods on record. Long-term conditions are also generally dry throughout the Edwards Plateau and in parts of South Texas and the Lower Valley.

Most of the state of Texas is in good shape heading into the warmer part of the year. Those places still undergoing long-term drought will come under drought stress sooner than other areas if rainfall deficits develop during late spring and summer. Normal rainfall through the summer would be sufficient to hold drought at bay in most areas.

## **3. Overall Statewide Drought Conditions**

The Climate Prediction Center (CPC) predicts below normal precipitation for the eastern half of Texas April 2007 to June 2007 and above normal temperatures for the entire state. The CPC predicts equal chances of below normal, normal, or above normal precipitation for the state from May 2007 to July 2007. During the same period, the CPC predicts above average temperatures for most of the state. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Seasonal U.S. Drought Outlook through June 2007 indicates drought conditions are ongoing but will improve.

The East region is experiencing "Incipient Dry Spell" conditions. The North Central and Edwards Plateau, and Lower Valley areas are under "Slightly Wet" conditions. The remainder of the state is under "Moderately Wet" to "Extremely Wet" drought conditions, according to the Palmer Drought Severity Index (PDSI). The PDSI varies from moderately wet, to slightly wet, incipient wet spell, near normal, incipient dry spell, mild drought, moderate drought, severe drought, and extreme drought in order of increasing severity.

The Crop Moisture Index (CMI) indicates "Moisture Adequate" to "Fields Too Wet" conditions throughout the state. The CMI varies from flooding, to standing water, moisture adequate, mildly dry, abnormally dry, excessively dry, severely dry, and extremely dry in order of increasing severity. The Six-Month Standardized Precipitation Index (SPI) indicates that at the end of September the entire state is experiencing "Near Normal" to "Extremely Wet" conditions.

According to the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality's (TCEQ) list of Public Water Supplies Effected by Drought, 155 water supply systems are under mandatory water use restrictions. Another 93 community water supply systems are under voluntary water use restrictions.

Water level measurements were available for six of the seven key monitoring wells. Water levels rose in four of the monitoring wells since the beginning of March, ranging

from 0.21 feet in the Coryell County Trinity well to 8.80 feet in the Bexar County Edwards well. Water levels declined in the remaining monitoring wells, ranging from 0.04 feet in the Castro County Ogallala well to 1.02 feet in the Tarrant County Paluxy well. The J-17 well recorded a water level of 56.90 feet below land surface. This water level is 23.10 feet above the Stage 1 critical management level.

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) indicates areas with high fire danger in small parts of Edwards Plateau and Southern regions. The KBDI is a drought index specifically used to describe potential or expected fire behavior. The index is classified as Low, Moderate, High or Extreme fire danger, in order of increasing severity. Texas Forest Service reports outdoor burning bans in 22 counties, primarily in west and central Texas.

#### **4. Water Utility Status**

April 2007 began with 286 public water systems on the drought list. Of these 286 systems, 155 systems are requiring customers to adhere to a mandatory outside watering schedule based on address and day of the week and 93 systems are asking customers to voluntarily reduce water use. A total of 38 water systems have removed all restrictions and returned to normal operations. It is expected that, due to recent rains and the forecast for rain to continue, additional water systems will remove watering restrictions.

#### **5. Water Rights – Statewide**

Increased rains in parts of the State provided some needed relief to the dry conditions in March, but it is still too early to declare the drought has ended. New temporary water use permit applications, both short and long term, are being reviewed on a site-specific basis and issued if there is sufficient surplus water at the requested source. Applications for new water use permits and amendments to existing permits remained near normal for the month. Beginning April 1 and continuing through the end of August, the annual Hale Clause and Lake Proctor restrictions are once again implemented. Owners of these water rights with imposed restrictions are required to call the “Hale Clause Hotline” on a weekly basis to determine if diversion of water is allowed for their permit. The availability of unappropriated water for new water use permits continues to decrease in all river basins in the State and the search for long-term, dependable alternate sources of water remains a high priority issue.

#### **6. Water Rights – Lower Rio Grande / Rio Grande Watermaster (RGWM)**

**Current Conditions:** As of March 24, 2007, the U.S. combined ownership at Amistad/Falcon stands at 74.27% of conservation capacity (2,470,233 AF), down from 91.33% (3,037,730 AF) a year ago at this time. Overall, the system is holding 63.01% (3,657,921 AF) of conservation capacity, with Amistad at 82.43% (2,597,509 AF) and Falcon at 39.96% (1,060,406 AF). Mexico has 47.91% (1,187,688 AF) of the water it could store at Amistad/Falcon.

**Allocations:** As of the printing of the February ownership report, an excess of 189,000 AF was allocated to Class A & B rights. Future allocations in 2007 exceed 20,000 AF.

**Storage & Loss Amistad vs. Falcon:** Approximately 1.85 million AF of water is stored at Amistad (104.6%) occupying 82,000 AF of Mexico's space at Amistad (which is not an issue so long as Amistad is not above conservation capacity). We are currently storing approximately 616,000 AF at Falcon (39.7 %).

Evaporation and seepage losses at Amistad YTD are 90,955 AF. For the same period, 47,831 AF was lost at Falcon due to evaporation and seepage. The ratio of loss between Amistad and Falcon continues to consistently be 2:1 with Amistad being twice as efficient in overall storage and loss as compared to total amount in storage.

**Releases to Meet Demands:** Mexico has released 24,075 AF from Amistad and 36,466 AF from Falcon for their needs. The U.S. has released 125,585 AF from Amistad and 128,496 AF from Falcon for our needs. Combined with gains between Amistad and Falcon, U.S. inflows to Falcon have totaled 150,755 AF. As is evident, 100% of our overall needs have been met in the middle and lower Rio Grande directly from Amistad this year. Keep in mind that this movement of water is primarily driven by our excess amount in storage at Amistad and the need to keep it below conservation capacity, particularly when the U.S. is occupying Mexico's space in Amistad

**Upper Rio Grande (New Mexico):** Elephant Butte in New Mexico is currently storing 610,463 AF (30.17%) and Caballo Dam in New Mexico, downstream of Elephant Butte is storing 18,646 AF (8.21%). This water storage in part is used to meet water needs in the El Paso area.

**Outlook:** Recent rains on the Upper part of the Rio Grande Basin during March (particularly the Pecos River) had a slight positive impact on the storage conditions for the U.S. However, these impacts may not be enough to sustain current storage conditions for very long considering the increase in irrigation demand which is expected to continue on an upward trend through May of 2007.

Late season monsoonal rains allowed Mexico to fill most of their reservoirs in the Rio Conchos. This condition has not existed since 1991-92. While overall deliveries of water by Mexico are below-average due slightly in part to the drought experienced for most of 2006, current basin conditions should provide for significant opportunities to mitigate the creation of a new debt when the current cycle ends in October 2007. To this end, the U.S. and Mexico held a meeting on March 30th, 2007 to discuss water deliveries to avoid the establishment of a deficit by the end of the current treaty cycle (October 2007). A follow-up meeting is scheduled for May 9th, and meetings will continue monthly through September 2007. The Rio Grande Watermaster is a direct participant in these meetings.

Recent U.S. shares in the Amistad/Falcon reservoir systems are as follows:

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>U.S. SHARE (percent)</u>	<u>TOTAL (ACRE-FEET)</u>
1994	65.7	2,271,609
1995	47.7	1,587,370
1996	35.6	1,183,637
1997	36.5	1,215,254
1998	39.8	1,324,700
1999	40.8	1,357,939
2000	41.7	1,387,125
2001	32.49	1,080,676
2002	34.76	1,156,072
2003	51.60	1,716,273
2004	95.37	3,172,308
2005	94.52	3,143,933
2006	74.71	2,484,826
2007	75.05	2,496,176

(Note: Numbers for previous years are the levels at the end of the year.)

## **7. South Texas Watermaster – Guadalupe / Lavaca / San Antonio / Nueces Region**

The month of March was one of record setting rainfalls in some parts of South Central Texas. The Concho Basin received some very needed and sustained rain falls for the month. A few counties received enough rain to be removed from the U.S. Drought Monitor drought designation. However, a great majority of both areas are still under some type of drought condition designation. The March rains certainly improved soil and stream flow conditions in these two areas of the state.

**Area of Coverage:** Bee, Goliad, Victoria, Calhoun, Jackson, Refugio, Aransas, San Patricio, Nueces, Kleberg, Jim Wells, Duval, Live Oak, Kenedy, Willacy, Brooks, and Jim Hogg Counties

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** This area continued to receive some rainfall throughout the month of March. Heavy rainfall was experienced mid-month and again toward the end of the month. Rainfall amounts measured from a trace to approximately 4 inches of rain. Therefore, the soil moisture to area farmlands has continued to improve. The Corpus Christi Reservoir System has received some inflows, and is continuing to receive inflows from the rains that were experienced toward the end of the month. The lake levels are therefore increasing. Most of the surface water diversions in this area are for municipal and industrial uses; little irrigation use has been noted. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates some of the area is currently experiencing abnormally dry conditions at this time, although with the recent rains, the area is improving.

**Streamflow conditions:** The streamflows of streams in the area are depicting a significant increase compared to last month. Most of the streamflows in the area are currently above normal for this time of year. The Guadalupe River near Victoria has current streamflows of approximately 8,180 CFS compared to 775 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 1,630 CFS. The San Antonio River near Goliad has current streamflows of approximately 2,600 CFS compared to 290 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 537 CFS. The Guadalupe River near Tivoli (below the confluence of the San Antonio River and Guadalupe River) currently has streamflows of 3,040 CFS, compared to 1,240 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 1,990 CFS. The Nueces River near Tilden is currently flowing at approximately 0.10 CFS compared to 0.10 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 73 CFS. The runoff from the recent rains has not yet reached this site, but streamflows are expected to rise dramatically when the runoff reaches this area. The Frio River near Tilden currently has streamflows of 83 CFS compared to 0.09 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 96 CFS. The Atascosa River near Whitsett currently has streamflows of approximately 504 CFS, compared to 10 CFS last month with the historical mean being 590 CFS. The Mission River near Refugio currently has streamflows of 82 CFS compared to 22 CFS last month with the historical mean being 50 CFS. The Aransas River near Skidmore is currently flowing at approximately 19 CFS compared to 5.7 CFS last month with the historical mean being 5.1 CFS. Streamflows over the Calallen Dam, near Corpus Christi were estimated at 48 CFS toward the end of the month compared to 8.4 CFS last month, with the historical mean being 207 CFS.

**Corpus Christi Reservoir System:** The Corpus Christi Reservoir System received some inflows for the month of March, increasing the level of the reservoir system. The reservoir system is currently at 74.4% (708,492 AF) compared to 66.3% (631,528 AF) last month. The level of the reservoir system at this same time last year was at 78.5% (735,369 AF). The level of Choke Canyon is currently at 76.4% (531,290 AF) compared to 73.9% (514,013 AF) last month. The level of the reservoir at this same time last year was at approximately 86.3% (600,289 AF). The level of Lake Corpus Christi is currently at 89.4% (177,202 AF) compared to 45.81% (117,805 AF) last month. The level of the reservoir at this same time last year was approximately 86.6% (135,080 AF). The City of

Corpus Christi continues to divert much of their monthly water supply needs from Lake Texana. The lake level of Lake Texana has risen slightly and is currently reported to be at approximately 44.1 mean sea level (msl) or 100.2% capacity compared to 43.8 msl or 99.5% capacity last month.

**Area of Coverage:** Edwards, Real, Kinney, Uvalde, Zavala, Dimmit, La Salle, and Webb Counties

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** The Southwest Texas area received much needed relief from the drought conditions for the month of March. The beginning of the month started out with no rain showers from Edwards County to La Salle County. From there, the middle of the month received rain showers for the whole Southwest region. Flooding occurred in the northern counties and heavy showers in the southern counties for the end of the month. The range of rainfall in the area is 1.50 to 7.0 inches for the month. Most of the diversions of surface water are for irrigation use and small amounts for municipal and industrial purposes. The crops being irrigated in the area are carrots, spinach, cabbage and wheat. The U.S. Drought Report indicates the area is still experiencing severe to extreme drought conditions at this time.

**Streamflow Conditions:** Most of the streamflows for the major streams in this area continue to drop and are flowing below the mean for this time of year. The Nueces River at Laguna has current streamflows of 399 CFS compared to 62 CFS for last month, with the mean being 104 CFS. The Nueces River near Brackettville has current streamflows of 16 CFS, compared to .15 CFS for last month, with the mean being 1.5 CFS. The Nueces River below Uvalde has current streamflows of 170 CFS compared to 11 CFS for last month, with the mean being 58 CFS. The Frio River at Concan has current streamflows of 116 CFS compared to 43 CFS for last month, with the mean being 95 CFS. The Sabinal River at Sabinal has current streamflows of 1.2 CFS compared to .07 CFS for last month, with the mean being 22 CFS. The Leona River near Uvalde has current streamflows of 12 CFS compared to 11 CFS for last month, with the mean being 101 CFS.

The streamflows of the intermittent and tributary streams in the area are currently flowing above the average for this time of the year.

**Area of Coverage:** Bandera, Blanco, Comal, Kendall, and Kerr Counties

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** This area received various amounts of precipitation, ranging from 6 to 11 inches for the month of March. The scattered showers during the month are now providing much needed soil moisture. With the current amount of rainfall for March, the soil moisture is near normal, according to the Soil Moisture Index. Most of the surface water diversions in this area are for municipal and industrial. The U.S. Drought Monitor indicates the area is in the abnormally dry to moderate drought conditions at this time.

**Stream flow Conditions:** Most of the streamflows of the major streams and their tributaries have risen in the month of March, due to the scattered showers. The Guadalupe River near Kerrville, Texas, is currently running above the normal mean for March. Stream flows of approximately 160 CFS, with the historical mean being 139 CFS. This equates to a 115% flow of the Guadalupe River flowing past Kerrville, Texas. The Medina River near Bandera, Texas, also was running above the normal mean for March. Current stream flows of approximately 227 CFS, with the historical mean being 156 CFS. This equates to a 145.5% flow of the Medina River flowing past Bandera, Texas. The above stated stream flow percentage is due to the heavy March rainfall.

**Drought Restrictions:** There are currently no restrictions, other than normal permit restrictions in place at this time. However, the river flows are being monitored on a daily bases. Most of the temporary permit holders that divert are able to do so.

**Lake Medina:** With the amount of rain that has fallen in this area, Lake Medina is now receiving inflows for the month of March. The conservation pool level for Lake Medina at the end of March was 39.4% (100,400 acre-feet (AF)), compared to last month's 35.59% (90,710 AF).

**Area of Coverage:** Atascosa, Karnes, Gonzales, Wilson, McMullen, Dewitt, Guadalupe, Lavaca, Fayette, Colorado, and Wharton Counties.

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** This area received 7 to 15 inches of rainfall for the month of March. The soil moisture conditions are very good in the area at this time. Lake Texana is at 100% capacity (previous month ended at 98%) which is 44.0 ft. above msl. Oat, wheat, and rye crops are doing very well at this time. New crop corn and milo have been planted and are growing well.

According to the U.S. Drought Monitoring System, parts of this area are not experiencing drought conditions at this time. Atascosa and McMullen Counties are experiencing abnormal to moderate drought conditions according this monitoring system.

**Stream flow conditions:** The flow of the San Antonio River near Falls City is currently 504 CFS; the historical mean for March is 296 cfs; and the ending for last month was 202 CFS. The Cibolo Creek near Falls City is currently 295 CFS; the ending for last month was 31 CFS, and the historical mean for March is 34 CFS. The Guadalupe River near Cuero is currently at 6320 CFS; the ending reading for last month was 725 CFS; the historical mean for March is 1250 CFS. The Lavaca River at Edna is currently 246 CFS; the ending reading for last month was 32 CFS; and the historical mean for March is 86 CFS. The Navidad River near Hallettsville is currently at 59 CFS; the ending reading for last month was 0 CFS; the historical mean for March is 46 CFS. The Atascosa River near Whitsett is currently 601 CFS; the ending reading for last month was 10 CFS; and the historical mean for March is 12 CFS. The Frio River near Tilden is currently 90 CFS; the ending reading for last month was .12 CFS; and the historical mean for March is 5.5 CFS. Lastly, the Nueces River near Tilden is currently .10 CFS; the final reading for last month was .12 CFS; and the historical mean for March is 5.5 CFS.

**Area of Coverage:** Bastrop, Bexar, Blanco, Caldwell, Comal, Fayette, Guadalupe, Hays, and Medina Counties

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** Very beneficial amounts of rainfall fell across the entire San Antonio Regional area during the month of March. Month-to-date rainfall measured at the San Antonio International Airport was 4.80 inches; the average for March is 1.89 inches. Total annual rainfall to date is 10.05 inches; normal year to date is 5.00 inches, a departure from normal of +5.05 inches. The U.S. Drought Monitor, dated March 27, 2007, indicates the San Antonio Regional Area is experiencing moderate to severe drought conditions. Ground moisture is excellent across the entire San Antonio Regional Area.

**Streamflow Conditions:** Small creeks and streams are now flowing throughout the San Antonio Regional Area. Spring planting has resumed and crops that were previously planted are showing strong signs of early growth due to the timely rains in March. Crops of corn, milo, green beans, squash, peas, tomatoes, wheat, and hay grazers have been planted. Municipal and irrigational water use has dropped dramatically with the above-average rainfall for March. Industrial use remains constant.

Streamflows are on the rise going into the end of March. The Guadalupe River at Spring Branch is currently 7,910 CFS; mean flow for March is 362 CFS. The San Marcos River at Luling is 965 CFS; mean flow for March is 403 cfs. Lastly, the Blanco River at Wimberley is 980 CFS; mean flow for March is 156 CFS.

Canyon Lake Reservoir is 911.60 feet elevation and is impounding 420,786 AF; total full pool is 740,900 AF and is 65.7% of capacity. Lake Medina is 1031.00 feet elevation; total full pool is 194,000 AF, currently impounding 101,000 AF, 32 feet below the spillway, and is 39.4% of capacity. The Edwards Aquifer level at the J17 well in Bexar is 673.7 feet; the historical average for March is 669.1 feet, and this is 4.6 feet above the monthly historical average. The San Marcos Springs are flowing at 235 CFS; the historical monthly average for March is 178.0 CFS. This is 57.0 CFS above the monthly historical average. Lastly, the Comal Springs are flowing at 303.0 CFS; the monthly historical flow for March is 305.0 CFS, and this is 2.0 CFS below the historical monthly average.

**Drought Restrictions:** Temporary permit restrictions have been lifted on all tributaries in the San Antonio Regional Area. Only permits with stream flow restrictions are being restricted.

The Concho River Valley received a good amount of precipitation in the month of March, most of it in the last week of the month. According to information provided by USDA, the State Drought Monitor Index rates the Concho Valley as Moderately Dry to Severe drought conditions.

**Area of Coverage:** Sterling, Tom Green, Irion, Concho, Coke, Runnels, Reagan, and Schleicher Counties.

**Rainfall and Area Conditions:** Temperatures for the month were within normal ranges. Rainfall for March was 3.83 inches. (Normal rainfall amount for the month of February was 1.08 inches). Irrigation demand in the Concho Valley was just beginning to increase as pre-irrigation for spring planting. The recent rainfall amounts have decreased this demand for pre-irrigation from surface water supplies. Soil saturation is good. Mesquite, oak, pecan, and other varieties of trees have put out their leaves. This indicates the end of their seasonal dormancy.

**Streamflow Conditions:** Mean daily discharge statistics for the month of January, based on 5 years of record for USGS Gauging Station 081307000 (Spring Creek above Twin Buttes Reservoir near San Angelo), are 22 cubic feet per second (CFS). The most recent value is 45 CFS. Mean daily discharge statistics at USGS Gauging Station 0813600 (Concho River at San Angelo), based on 76 years of record is 26 CFS. Currently it is at 358 CFS. Mean daily discharge statistics for the month of January at USGS Gauging Station 08128000 (South Concho at Christoval, Texas), based on 70 years of record is 19 CFS. The most recent daily value is 9.4 CFS. Area lakes indicate Lake Nasworthy is at 87% (8839 AF), O. C. Fisher is at 9.82% (7808 AF), and Twin Buttes Lake is 21.49 % (40,009 AF) of capacity.

## **8. Upper Colorado**

The upper Colorado River area received more than normal precipitation during the month of March 2007. The National Weather Service in San Angelo reported monthly precipitation of 3.86 inches in March, 2.87 inches above normal. The Midland, Odessa, and Big Spring area received more than normal precipitation during the month as well. Tributaries in the upper portion of the upper Colorado River watershed are mostly



flowing at levels above the long-term medians. Tributaries in upper reaches of the lower portion (San Saba River watershed and Llano River watershed) of the upper Colorado River watershed are also flowing above the long term medians. The pool levels in E.V. Spence and O.H. Ivie Reservoirs rose slightly during the month. As of the end of the month, the pool levels of E.V. Spence and O.H. Ivie Reservoirs were 13.5 % and 40 %, respectively.

## **9. Texas Panhandle and Southern High Plains**

**Amarillo Area:** The National Weather service in Amarillo reported: 2.35 inches for March, which is 2.3 inches above the March average. Approximately 4.60 inches of rain fell since January 1, 2007, which is 2.41 inches above the annual average to date. Area lakes received much needed precipitation. MacKenzie gained 1.62 feet for the month with a total rainfall of 4.3 inches as of March 28. Meredith gained 0.78 feet for the month (no rainfall totals available). Greenbelt gained 1.10 feet for the month with a total of 4.85 inches of rain.

**Lubbock Area:** The Lubbock area had a tremendous March as far as precipitation goes. Lubbock received 5.68 inches for the month and similar amounts were recorded throughout the area. The total precipitation for 2007 now stands at 7.16 inches, which is 5.25 inches above normal for this point in the year. The long term drought situation has not changed and all of the communities previously noted as being on mandatory water restrictions remain on those restrictions. No new communities were added to the water restrictions list during the month of February. White River Lake is down 24 feet from normal (normal is 46 feet at the dam); this is a one foot rise from the end of February 2007. Lake Alan Henry is full; however, this lake is not used for public drinking water supplies at present.

## **10. Agricultural Concerns**

Good moisture was received over most of the state during March and early April. Soil moisture is abundant over most of the state, with the exception of the counties along the Rio Grande from Terral south to Willacy. Agricultural producers have had more problems with excess rain interfering with planting and stand establishment in south and Central Texas than from lack of moisture. The High Plains and Rolling Plains have good soil moisture. The wheat crop received some damage from the freezing weather on April 7 and 8, but still hold good promise for an above average crop. Winter pastures are growing well over most of the state, bringing relief to ranchers who struggle to provide feed for livestock due to the shortage and price of hay. Warm season grasses are growing well over most of the state, excepting the High Plains, where freezes and cool temperatures delay growth.

Much of the southwest and west Texas region is impacted by prolonged drought and is still short of stock water. Perennial grasses have been damaged by prolonged drought, overgrazing, and desert termites. It will take a prolonged period of favorable weather to restore normal pasture conditions.

Continued rains across the state have given many producers a positive outlook on this growing season. Wheat producers anticipate this growing season to be one of the most productive in several years. Most areas of the state received moderate to heavy amounts of moisture. In Central Texas, heavy downpours dropped from 2.0 to 8.0 inches, causing flooding in a few areas. Eastern Texas and the Panhandle both received mostly 0.50 to 2.0 inches of rainfall. The Trans-Pecos area and South Texas both received mostly 0.01 to 1.0 inches of rainfall, as isolated showers brought as much as 1.5 inches to small sections. The Lower Valley received mostly 0.01 to 0.25 inches of rainfall. In most areas of the state, soils dried enough to allow farming activities to

continue, but in a few areas such as the Blacklands additional rainfall kept soils too wet for field work. Supplemental feeding continued to decline considerably across most areas of the state as forage growth increased.

#### **Field Crops Report:**

**Small Grains:** Recent moisture and warm weather continued to improve wheat conditions in the Plains, Cross Timbers, Blacklands, and South Texas. Insect activity remained light in the Northern High Plains, but weed spraying continued. Also in the Northern High Plains, producers continued to pull cattle off wheat fields intended for grain or hay. Wheat continued to progress in the Southern Low Plains, and some fields have even shown signs of early heading. Statewide, wheat and oat condition was mostly fair to good.

**Cotton:** Land preparations were halted in the Southern High Plains due to the increase in moisture. Producers in the Southern Low Plains reported good levels of underground moisture as they continue to prepare for planting.

**Corn:** "Standing water" in some fields damaged corn acreage in isolated areas of the Blacklands. Poorly drained fields in South Texas were showing some signs of yellowing.

#### **Fruit, Vegetable and Specialty Crop Report:**

Producers in North East Texas continued to prepare land for planting of tomatoes, squash, and watermelons. Harvest of cabbage, spinach, and broccoli continued during the beginning of the week in the Edwards Plateau. There were also a few reports of cabbage and potatoes being harvested in South Texas.

**Pecans:** Producers finished trimming trees and continued to prepare orchards for watering.

#### **Livestock, Pasture and Range Report:**

Pastures continued to "green up" in the Northern Low Plains. Native pastures also continued to improve in the Southern Low Plains. Recent rains have helped range and pasture conditions in the Blacklands, increasing forage available to cattle. In North East Texas, pastures were "greening up" with ryegrass, clovers, with some warm season forages emerging. Some producers in North East Texas still remained concerned about the high costs of fertilizer. Range and pastures in the Edwards Plateau have shown a dramatic change over the last month as many are "greening up" and growing. There have been a few reports of toxic spring plants in rangelands along the Coastal Bend. Included in these reports are some problems of lobelia. In South Texas, native range and pasture conditions continued to improve, providing forage for livestock. Livestock body conditions continue to improve as the availability of high quality forage increases. Statewide, range and pasture condition was mostly fair to good.

#### **Weekly Texas Hay Report for Friday, April 6:**

Prices remain steady in spite of tight supply. Light to moderate movement has been reported in most areas. Comments have been made that the market is at a near standstill and people are waiting to see what will happen with new crop. Negotiations on new crops continue, with first cutting being one to four weeks away depending on the area. Some reports have been made of first cuttings in the West, North Central and South. In the Panhandle late last week some areas experienced rain and some hail which has delayed field work. Earlier this week temperatures were above average but have returned to normal. Corn planting will begin soon. The West has received some rain as well as hail which has damaged some young alfalfa in areas. The North, Central and Eastern areas have received rain, and along the Brazos River they experienced extreme flooding forcing some growers to replant. Corn has been planted in this area and is in good condition. Some May beetles and tent caterpillars have been reported. In the South some areas have received rain and some have experienced windy conditions causing sand to blow. Most areas in Texas are forecasted to receive colder temperatures and possible freezes this weekend, which has caused concern of crop

damage and set backs. Soil moisture has been rated as short to surplus. Pasture and rangeland conditions are poor to good, with most areas reporting improvement. Supplemental feeding continues in some areas. The Texas Department of Agriculture has the Hay and Grazing Hot Line set up for linking buyers and sellers, at (877) 429-1998 or on the Web at [www.tda.state.tx.us](http://www.tda.state.tx.us).

#### **11. Drought Impacts to Wildlife**

No information available at this time.

#### **12. Wildfire Concerns**

The Keetch-Byram Drought Index (KBDI) is used to help determine potential for fire risk. It is a numerical index where each number is an estimate of the amount of precipitation (in 100ths of an inch) needed to bring the soil back to saturation. The index ranges from 0 to 800, with 0 representing a saturated soil, and 800 a completely dry soil. The KBDI's relationship to fire danger is that as the index increases, the vegetation is subjected to increased moisture stress. KBDI levels and its relationship to expected fire potential are reflected in the following:

**KBDI = 0 – 200:** Soil moisture and large class fuel moistures are high and do not contribute much to fire intensity. This is typical of spring dormant season following winter precipitation.

**KBDI = 200 – 400:** Typical of late spring; early growing season. Lower litter and duff layers are drying and beginning to contribute to fire intensity.

**KBDI = 400 – 600:** Typical of late summer, early fall. Lower litter and duff layers contribute to fire intensity and will burn actively.

**KBDI = 600 – 800:** Often associated with more severe drought and increased wildfire occurrence. Intense, deep-burning fires with significant downwind spotting can be expected. Live fuels can also be expected to burn actively at these levels.

There are currently 11 counties, illustrated in Attachment 2, with KBDI values in excess of 400, indicating that areas within these counties are beginning to experience dry conditions, which could result in an increased fire risk potential.

The Council, which is chaired by Jack Colley, Chief, Governor's Division of Emergency Management, is composed of state agencies concerned with the effects of drought and fire on the citizens of the State of Texas. The attached information was compiled and provided by representatives listed below. Points of contact, telephone numbers, and web site addresses are also provided.

Jack Colley, Chief, Governor's Division of Emergency Management, (512) 424-2443, fax (512) 424-2444, web site: <http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/dem>

John Sutton, Texas Water Development Board, (512) 463-7988, fax (512) 463-9893, web site: <http://www.twdb.state.tx.us>

Bill Billingsley, Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, (512) 239-1697, fax (512) 239-4770, web site: <http://www.tceq.state.tx.us>

Richard Egg, Texas State Soil & Water Conservation Board, (254) 773-2250, fax (254) 773-3311, web site: <http://www.tsswcb.state.tx.us>

Pal Scully, Texas Department of Agriculture, (512) 475-1611, fax (512) 463-5837, web site: <http://agr.state.tx.us>

Dr. Travis Miller, Texas Cooperative Extension, (979) 845-4008, fax (979) 845-0604, web site: <http://soilcrop.tamu.edu>

Cindy Loeffler, Texas Parks & Wildlife Department, (512) 912-7015, fax (512) 707-1358, web site: <http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us>

Judith Jenness, Department of Housing and Community Affairs, (512) 475-2135, Fax (512) 475-7498, web site: <http://www.tdhca.state.tx.us>

James Hull, Texas Forest Service, (979) 458-6606, fax: (979) 458-6610, web site: <http://txforestservation.tamu.edu>

Scott Alley, Texas Department of Transportation, (512) 416-3187, fax (512) 416-2941, web site: <http://www.dot.state.tx.us/>

Paul Tabor, Texas Department of State Health Services, (512) 458-7126, fax (512) 458-7472, web site: <http://www.dshs.state.tx.us/>

Thomas Walker, Office of the Governor, Economic Development & Tourism, (512) 936-0169, fax (512) 936-0141, web site: <http://www.governor.state.tx.us/divisions/ecodev>

Harvey Everheart, Texas Alliance of Groundwater Districts, (806) 872-9205, fax (806) 872-2838, web site: <http://www.texasgroundwater.org/>

Dr. John W. Nielsen-Gammon, Office of the State Climatologist, (979) 862-2248, fax (979) 862-4466, web site: <http://www.met.tamu.edu/osc/>

Gus Garcia, Office of Rural Community Affairs, (512) 936-7876, fax (512) 936-6776, web site: <http://www.orca.state.tx.us>

CC:

Amy Jeter, Committee Clerk, Senate Finance Committee  
Sarah Hicks, Committee Director, Senate Finance Committee  
Teddy Carter, Committee Clerk, Senate Natural Resources Committee  
Amy Peterson, Committee Director, House Appropriations  
Hope Wells, Committee Clerk, House Natural Resources Committee  
Steven Schar, Committee Clerk, House Agriculture and Livestock Committee  
Gina Chung, Committee Clerk, House Criminal Jurisprudence Committee  
Zak Covar, Policy Advisor for TCEQ Issues, Governor's Policy Office  
Auburn Mitchell, Policy Advisor for Agriculture/TDA, Governor's Policy Office  
Rob Johnson, Lt. Governor's Chief of Staff  
Carmen Cernosek, Lt. Governor's Natural Resources Policy Analyst  
Shane Linkous, Deputy Division Chief, Intergovernmental Relations, Attorney General's Office  
Ernest Angelo, Jr., Chairman, Public Safety Commission  
Louis E. Sturns, Member, Public Safety Commission  
Colonel Thomas Davis, Director, Department of Public Safety  
Lieutenant Colonel David McEathron, Assistant Director, Department of Public Safety  
Lori Gabbert, Budget Analyst, Legislative Budget Board (LBB-DPS)  
Tom Lambert, Budget Analyst, Legislative Budget Board (LBB-TCEQ)  
Ed Perez, Executive Director, Texas Office of State-Federal Relations, Washington, DC  
Brandon Steinmann, Director, Texas Office of State-Federal Relations, Austin, Texas



