



## **Water Policy Committee**

**Thursday, November 7, 2024**

**9:30 AM**

**Brazos River Authority**

**Lt. Gen. Phillip J. Ford Central Office**

**4600 Cobbs Dr. Waco, TX 76710**



**1. Call Meeting to Order**

**2. Notice of Meeting**

**3. Attendance and Announcements**

**4. Public Input - Public questions and comments on agenda items or water planning issues (limited to 5 minutes each)**



## **5. Discussion and possible action on the Water Policy**

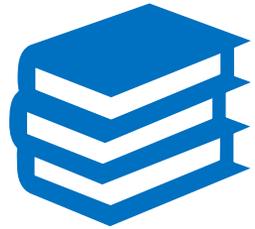
**Committee's recommendation to the Brazos G RWPG Water Policy for the 2026 Brazos G Plan**

# Brazos G Water Policy Committee

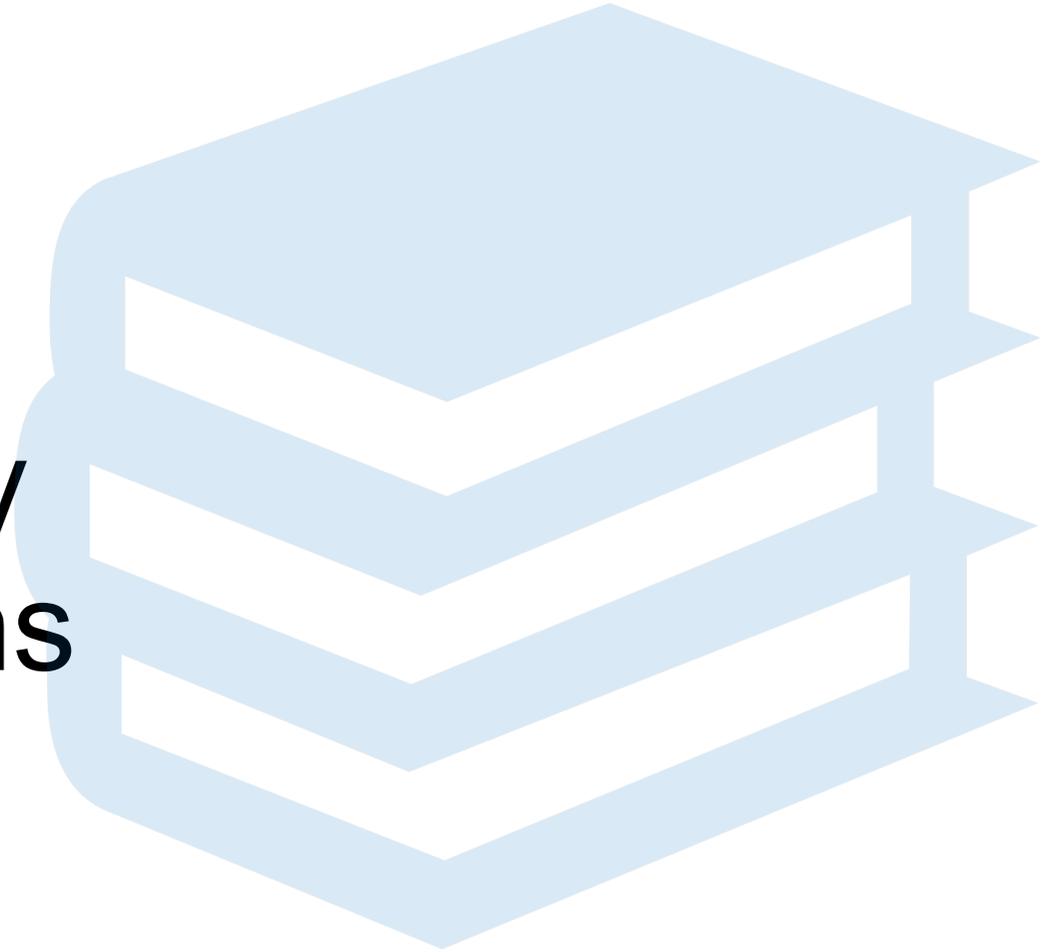
Item 5

**Discussion and Possible Action on Chapter 8 Policy Language**





# Development of Chapter 8 - Policy Recommendations



# Process

- Policy Committee Meetings
  - June 19, 2024
  - August 1, 2024
  - November 7, 2024
- Technical Consultant presented information from 2021 Plan
- Technical Consultant and committee members reviewed, brainstormed, and updated language and recommendations
- Full committee reviewed and adopted recommendation of revisions to Brazos G RWPG.

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.1	Recommendations Concerning River and Stream Segments Having Unique Ecological Value	Brazos G has not chosen to designate any stream segments as having unique ecological value.
8.2	Recommendations Concerning Sites Uniquely Suited for Reservoir Construction	<p>Brazos G has previously identified the following sites as uniquely suited for reservoir construction:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cedar Ridge Reservoir (City of Abilene)</li> <li>• Turkey Peak Reservoir (Palo Pinto County MWD No. 1)</li> <li>• Millers Creek Off-Channel Reservoir (North Central Texas Municipal Water Authority)</li> <li>• Brushy Creek Reservoir (City of Marlin)</li> <li>• Coryell County Off-Channel Reservoir (Coryell County)</li> </ul>
8.3	Brazos G – A Valuable Texas Resources	Mission of the Brazos G RWPG and role it serves

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4	Legislative and Policy Recommendations	Revised overview
8.4.1	Issue #1: Streamlining the Processes for Project Implementation	<p>Recommends that Texas Legislature direct all State and local agencies involved in planning, reviewing, and/or permitting water projects to develop defined outcomes and measures of the process for evaluating, approving, permitting, coordinating and funding in order to allow timely project implementation.</p>
8.4.2	Issue #2: Plan Implementation	<p>Recognizes the need for expeditious implementation of the State Water Plan facilitated by the use of the State Water Implementation Fund for Texas (SWIFT).</p>
8.4.3	Issue #3: Coordination between Regional Water Planning Groups and Groundwater Conservation Districts	<p>Coordination and cooperation among GCDs, GMAs, the RWPG, and other stakeholders are paramount to successful and accurate planning.</p> <p>TWDB revised its planning rules to include a MAG Peak Factor to assist regional water plans in having the ability to reflect how GCDs anticipate managing groundwater production under drought conditions, but this effort is lacking.</p> <p>In order for the planning group to accurately plan and predict needs, a more flexible approach in the use of MAG is necessary.</p>

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.4	Issue #4: System Operation of Water Facilities	<p>Fully supports the Asset Management Program for Small Systems (AMPSS) to assist small water and wastewater systems.</p> <p>Fully supports the Water Utilities Technical Assistance Program (WUTAP) with a primary goal to provide eligible water and wastewater utilities with financial, managerial and technical capabilities necessary to apply for financial assistance from the TWDB.</p> <p>Recommends continued support for water loss technical assistance and data validation services.</p>
8.4.5	Issue #5: Interbasin Transfers of Surface Water	<p>Recommend the re-evaluation of the junior water rights provision that is automatically assigned to interbasin transfers.</p> <p>Recommend that statutory rules, policies and administrative code be reviewed, and the permitting and review process be streamlined</p>
8.4.6	Issue #6: Groundwater Governance	<p>Supports continued management of fresh, brackish, and saline groundwater by GCDs and the joint planning effort of the GMAs. TWDB and GCDs should continue to improve and advance the best available science for use in the development and conservation of all groundwater resources.</p>

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.7	Issue #7: Conjunctive Use of Groundwater and Surface Water	Brazos G recommends state sponsored incentives to further developing frameworks to evaluate conjunctive use projects.
8.4.8	Issue #8: Aquifer Storage and Recovery (ASR)	<p>An improved legal/public policy framework is needed to address these issues and enhance adoption. Recommend that these water management strategies include sufficient hydrologic study to protect receiving aquifers.</p> <p>Recommend that appropriate state agencies and state legislative bodies review TWC 27.201 (1) and consider renaming Aquifer Recharge Project to Managed Aquifer Recharge. This will create consistency with other states as well as eliminate cumbersome wording and misunderstanding of this strategy within the regional planning framework.</p> <p>Encourages the use and development of ARP (aka MAR) to enhance and protect water resources available in our region.</p>
8.4.9	Issue #9: Municipal Per Capita Water Use	Brazos G recommends the regional water planning process be changed to separate non-residential and residential water use and look at both independently. Need for consistency in all water use calculations, and better guidance as to whether regional planning groups are to use raw water delivered or treated water provided in calculating water use for resource planning.”

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.10	Issue #10: Reservoir Water Management	<p>Recognizes the primary purpose of conservation storage capacity in Texas reservoirs is for water supply. Recommend that appropriate state agencies and state legislative bodies uphold the critically important primary purpose of Texas water supply reservoirs to ensure long-standing agreements and contracts are honored and deliveries are not jeopardized by secondary or tertiary interests.</p> <p>Further, consideration of providing educational programs regarding reservoir purpose and management and other appropriate assistance for businesses and others impacted is recommended.</p> <p>Recommends appropriate state agencies and state legislative bodies protect water supply reservoirs from future policies or rules that could cause a conversion from prioritizing water supply purposes priority to flood control purposes</p>
8.4.11	Issue #11: Watershed Planning/Source Water Protection	<p>Encourages all governmental agencies, when making regulatory/ permitting decisions or influencing decisions regarding land and resource use, to give preference to alternatives to protect or enhance the quality of water so that such water resources may be utilized for beneficial use.”</p>

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.12	Issue #12: Water Pricing and Conservation	<p>Encourages water providers to seriously consider implementing appropriate rate structures that would be consistent with best management practices for the water industry.</p> <p>State agencies responsible for regulating these rate structures should provide water providers with the ability to not only cover the cost of service but allow water rate structures to act as a tool in recovering the known future costs of developing or acquiring the next available resource.</p> <p>Similarly, groundwater conservation districts should consider imposing transport fees only on water actually transported, not merely permitted for transport, out of a district.”</p>
8.4.13	Issue #13: Reuse of Wastewater Effluent	<p>Promotes full development of municipal wastewater effluent as a resilient water resource that can be responsibly used to help meet the water needs of the State of Texas, consistent with the protection of downstream, senior water rights.</p> <p>Further support state agencies and organizations in their efforts to develop technologies and permit the storage and reuse of wastewater effluent as a resilient water source and the protection of downstream surface water rights.</p>

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.14	Issue #14: Education	<p>Water education is important and supports water conservation and public awareness programs at the state and local level. Research indicates that there is a strong relationship between knowledge of water sources and a willingness to conserve.</p>
8.4.15	Issue #15: Effects of the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) on Water Supply Systems	<p>Encourages continued support to small and disadvantaged water systems with assistance for planning, acquisition, design, and construction of water infrastructure to meet Federal SDWA standards.</p> <p>Brazos G supports education, proactive assistance, and, where necessary, regionalization to aid these water supply systems.</p>

Section	Topic	Summary of Recommendation
8.4.16	Issue #16: Planning Process Improvements	Recommends the Texas Legislature provide funding and direct the TWDB to adopt policies in the following areas:
	Strategic Initiatives	TWDB should provide funds for studies deemed important by the regional water planning groups as strategic initiatives that should be pursued (similar to Phase 1 studies performed during the third cycle).
	Planning Support for Small Systems	Small systems are often at higher risk of losing water supply during drought, and the TWDB should provide support and funding for closer coordination with small systems
	Continued support for water loss technical assistance and data validation services	This provision will help yield more accurate data collection and dissemination; promote affordable water service; guide water utilities on how to best address and fund water loss mitigation; and ensure that state financial resources are expended effectively.
	Mid-cycle Legislative Requirements	The Texas Legislature should not change the requirements of the regional water plans after the current planning cycle has commenced without also providing additional funding for increased requirements.

# Action Requested

## Action

- Authorize the technical consultant to submit on behalf of the Policy Committee the Policy Recommendations for Chapter 8 of the 2026 Brazos G Regional Water Plan for the Brazos G RWPG's consideration and possible action, consistent with the information discussed in this committee meeting, for potential adoption, and approve for the consultant to work with the Chair to submit further revisions and make responses to revision requests by the RWPG as needed.

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## **6. Adjourn**